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A HISTORY OF PAINTING

VI

REMBRANDT
1606 – 1669

DUTCH SCHOOL OF AMSTERDAM

"OVAL BUST OF AN OLD LADY WITH WHITE CAP AND RUFF"

(National Gallery)

Inscribed, "Æ Sue 83," and "Rembrandt ft. 1634."

An oval, painted in oil on wood. 2 ft. 3 in. h. × 1 ft. 9 in. w. (0·686 × 0·534).

A HISTORY OF PAINTING

BY HALDANE MACFALL

WITH A PREFACE BY

FRANK BRANGWYN

IN EIGHT VOLUMES. ILLUSTRATED WITH TWO HUNDRED PLATES IN COLOUR

VOL. V

THE DUTCH GENIUS

63887

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FOREWORD

We are now come to that astounding achievement whereby the Dutch, shedding alien vision, by sheer power and innate gifts, thrust forward the whole utterance of the art of painting so that it could create what the Italian genius failed to create, and the Spanish genius only partly created, the new sensing of man that was the very Renaissance of the world—the democratic spirit. It is usual to read that the Church and aristocracy were essential to the rise of great art. It is superficial thinking, so to speak. Even in Spain and Flanders, art was balked by these things as much as helped by them. The democracy, the moment it drew the sword and stood forth in all its proud dignity, uttered itself in undying art—and Holland was the outpost of democracy, of the brotherhood of man that Church and aristocracy bitterly assailed. She bled for it; but she won.

Rembrandt found in the Dutch home and in everyday life a poetic thrill such as no art had beforetime uttered. Within the four walls of a room and in the city's streets his eyes saw the sun and the shadows weave a romance of haunting mystery about everyday living that makes the art of the years that went before seem a very affectation.

It may be, and probably is, that the ordinary bookish critic, being about as advanced in artistic sensing as the primitives, feels the art in the earlier halting endeavour rather than in the fuller and deeper art of a greater day; but he who can sense art more

fully will receive into his vision a more profound and resonant art from the master-work of Hals and Rembrandt and Vermeer.

The gossip pens of Houbraken and German Sandrart left a fairly inaccurate story of the lives of the Dutch genius in painting; recent research has done much to winnow the grain from the husk. Of the writers upon the genius of Dutch art in the English tongue, the excellent little volume on Frans Hals reveals Mr. G. S. Davies a sound sifter of evidence. On Rembrandt, the monumental catalogue by Bode, in eight great volumes, with its masterly idea of a complete representation of all his known works, is of course the finest; but it is a library affair. Michel's valuable work, translated into English, is a most useful book, and its poor illustrations at least are plentiful. The Englished version of Dr. Bode's interesting volume Great Masters of Dutch and Flemish Painting *is essential to the student, for Dr. Bode has few rivals in this field of research.*

Dr. Bode is astounding in his scholarly research into the history of painting amongst the Dutch; but having no deep sense of the significance of art itself, he is unable to appreciate modern art; and his under-rating of the modern achievement and his over-rating of the achievement of the past, are only a part of that professorial enthusiasm that mistakes the technique of the past as the standard of judgment for the present. But if, as with Berenson in Italian art, the student will reject all his dogma upon art completely, and rely on him for the history of the development of the several artists, he will find few authorities to compare with him.

As regards Rembrandt, the student will find the illustrations in Knackfuss's small book upon him to be far finer than those in Michel's useful volume, especially the etchings, which are but ill reproduced in Michel's work.

Kugler has been brought fairly up to date by Sir Joseph Crowe, but is wretchedly written and needlessly and repulsively dull.

FOREWORD

An interesting volume is Geffroy's Dutch Masters at the National Gallery, *rich in good illustrations, and with a very sound table of artist's dates; nor can I forbear to mention a cheap work by Gustave Vanzype on* Vermeer of Delft, *which, though in French, contains a very full number of illustrations most valuable to the student.*

HALDANE MACFALL.

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Alkmaar
ZUIDER ZEE
Zwolle
Haarlem
Amsterdam
GELDERLAND
Naarden
The Old Rhine
Zutfen
The Hague
Leiden
Utrecht
Delft
Rotterdam
Arnhem
Munster
The Maas
Dordrecht
The Waal
Nijmegen
Kleve
ZEELAND
Walcheren
NORTH
Breda
B. RABANT
Bergen op Zoom
Tilburg
Dortmund
Venlo
Sluys
Ostend
Bruges
Antwerp
Düsseldorf
Dunkirk
Ghent
Scheldt
Mechlin
Calais
FLANDERS
Alost
Louvain
Cologne
Courtrai
Brussels
Maestricht
Aix la Chapelle
Tournai
Liege
Verviers
Bonn
Lille
Tournai
Spa
Namur
Coblentz
Ems
Charleroi
Mons
Arras
Valenciennes
Dinant
Cambray
Ardennes
St Quentin
Amiens
Bouillon
Mezieres
Arlon
Luxemburg
Treves
Moselle
FRANCE
Reims
Verdun
Metz
Paris
Chalons
HALDANE
MACFALL

A HISTORY OF PAINTING

INTRODUCTION

THERE opens before us the astounding realm of the Dutch art. We are arrived at that profound utterance of art that shed splendour over Holland throughout the sixteen-hundreds—those wonderful sixteen-hundreds that saw Spain also burst into her supreme achievement in the South, and the Flemish genius at the fulness of its flowering.

Thus far, then, we have come along the road of artistic endeavour. Central Italy, coming to her greatest genius in and about Florence, had given herself forth in an art that wondrously expresses the glamour of the Italian Renaissance —in which the seeking after Beauty brings charm to a romantic age that, as a matter of fact, was an age of bastard civilisation, in which the Italian peoples awoke to an academic life founded on an alien endeavour and ideal wholly out of harmony with her own life, and producing a bastard form of Christianity that was pagan in intention, and made of Christianity a pagan aristocratism both in the State and in the Church—both State and Church being befouled by the most ignoble living, and bespattered with the blood of blackest treacheries and crimes—so that the sanctity of hospitality was used as a cover for poisoning guests, and the sanctity of the high altars could not awe a Borgia from stabbing an enemy who clung to the Borgian Pope upon the steps of the sanctuary of the most sacred altar of Rome. That such a people, endowed with exquisite gifts as they were, should not arrive at a majestic

concept of life was inevitable. They sought inspiration from Greece and ancient Rome, but found it rather in the bastard ideals of their own day. Their art was in the same measure limited. Even Michelangelo, the greatest of them, though he strained the instrument of Italian Renaissance painting to its extreme orchestration, was baffled by the narrow gamut of its music, for giant as he was, the splendour of colour was denied to him.

Then came to the Venetians a far fuller utterance, revealed, partly from the Rhine, to Giorgione, and fulfilled in consummate fashion by the great Venetians, who felt the musical rhythms that are in colour as they were never revealed to the Florentines. These Venetians paid back the debt to the Netherlandish painters, again and again; and out of their combined essence came Caravaggio and created with the late Venetians the essence that was to be distilled in the poetic Realism of Spain.

But the essence and root of this revelation came out of Holland; and we are about to survey the wondrous miracle it wrought in the purest art that painting had as yet given to the world in the supreme masterpieces of Rembrandt and Hals and Vermeer of Delft, of Cuyp and Potter, and Ruysdael and Hobbema, and De Heem and Kalf, together with a galaxy of genius such as no nation has ever surpassed in one century.

We have followed the early Netherlandish Primitives, and weighed their artistic endeavour—and it has been seen that it was so bound together that it comes near to pedantry to separate Flemish from Dutch; indeed its most significant essence was more Dutch than Flemish whether inspiring the born Dutch or the born Flemish; and it is wiser to accept it, as well as the early French endeavour, as Nether-

landish. And, in fact, the kneeling figures of the *Four Lords of Montfort*, all of a row, at Amsterdam, must have been painted before 1345, for they fell in battle against the Frisians that year. So that Dutch art has deep roots.

But the passing of the Netherlands to Spain was to rend the Netherlands asunder; to cleave the peoples into two, so widely apart that they were soon not only separated by the great river that divides their land into breeds wholly alien—alien in religion, alien in thinking, alien in soul, in manner of life—but in their very significance and aims as the poles asunder.

The Flemish were of the less virile breed; they bowed the neck to Spain—and it followed, as the night the day, that they thereby began to scorn themselves and to seek an alien culture in Italy. Their art speedily lost its reality and its force, and lisped a foreign tongue. The Italian Baroque and the Jesuit style triumphed; yet, whimsically enough, produced in Flanders her supreme genius in Rubens and Jordaens and Van Dyck. But even whilst the Flemish blood jigged too hotly through the veins of these men to allow them complete surrender to Italy; by the Italian accent they affected they in that measure shackled their high enterprise; and into the Flemish art crept that bastard note that disfigures it.

But north of the Rhine dwelt the unspoilt Netherlander. He refused to bow his neck to Spain, or his spirit to Rome; scorned to surrender his body or soul to any race whatsoever. And sword in hand, and taking to the sea, the Dutchmen leagued themselves together in the death-bond, fought against enormous odds for freedom—and stood forth triumphant, an example to the ages. It was inevitable that a people endowed with such a vigour of soul and impelled by such virile purpose, should burst into song;

and the poets of Holland found their utterance of life in the art of painting.

Caravaggio had fired Italy with a wider, deeper, and more virile art in the battle-cry of the Tenebrosi, an art that was founded in nature, not in the paintings of others—its ordering, that the deeps of art could only be sounded by the play of light against shadow. This larger gamut of art that added vast increase to the orchestration of art's utterance, sent out its intention to Spain and Holland, both the peoples of these lands being ripe, by native instinct and endeavour, to fulfil that revelation for the fulfilling of which Italy was now too exhausted.

In the fourteen-hundreds, the Dukes of Burgundy became also lords of Flanders and Artois. Philip the Good became lord of Namur, Brabant, Limburg, Antwerp, Mechlin, Hainault, Holland, Zealand, and Luxembourg; and Charles the Bold added Alsace-Lorraine, Gelderland, and Zutphen. The death of Charles the Bold gave these Netherlands to the House of Hapsburg through the marriage of Charles the Bold's daughter, Mary of Burgundy, to Maximilian, who became Emperor of Germany. To Mary was born Philip the Handsome, whose son became King of Spain in 1516 and Emperor of Germany as Charles v in 1519—the famous patron of Titian. Charles v abdicated in 1555 and went into a monastery; and in 1555 the Netherlands found themselves under the lordship of his narrow and bigoted son Philip ii of Spain.

The thorny heritage of these Netherlands came to Philip ii of Spain as the Seventeen Provinces, alien to each other in speech, in race, and by government. The Flamand in Brabant, the German in the west, the Walloon to the south, and the Dutchman in the north were peoples apart.

And Philip brought contempt of them all as his sceptre of government. By 1564 the land was in hot ferment, and knew terrible blood-letting.

In 1568 the brutal Duke of Alva came to Brussels out of Spain to begin that Eighty Years' Strife which was to shatter the Spanish power, and to end in 1648 with the Peace of Munster whereby Spain surrendered their independence to the Seven Northern Provinces. The ferocious brutality of Alva had aroused not only the Protestants of the north, but the bitter hatred of the Catholics of the south. The land broke into open revolt in 1572, under William the Silent, Prince of Orange (1533-1584). Alva's successor Requesens died of fever, and the 8th of November 1576 saw the Northern and Southern States ally themselves in a compact against the Spanish in the famous pacification of Ghent.

Philip II's rigorous tyranny could not be carried out either by Don John of Austria nor by his successor Alexander of Parma. In 1579 the Seven Northern Provinces united in the blood-bond of the Union of Utrecht; from that day the Dutch drifted apart from the Flemish.

For some thirty years or so, the Netherlanders had been awakening to the fierce desire for liberty that was the very essence of the religious Reformation—that Reformation that, under its outer religious discontent with Italian and Spanish domination, called to vigorous breeds far more hotly with its battle-cry of Individual Freedom and its national aspirations. And persecution and torture but cemented the yearnings of the people with the august seal of blood.

The year 1581 saw the Seven Northern Provinces

declare their independence, and proclaim William the Silent, Prince of Orange, their sovereign. His foul assassination three years thereafter, in the July of 1584, sent his son Maurice to the leadership of the Dutch folk.

From 1585, Maurice governed the Dutch until his death in 1625—a period during which the wealth of Holland knew vast increase, and a group of artists was born who were to make the land famous for all time: Rembrandt, Jan van Goyen, Ruysdael, the two Ostades, Terborch, Cuyp, Paul Potter.

The brother of Maurice, Frederick Henry, succeeded him as stadtholder from 1625 to 1647, which years as they ran out saw the republic come to still wider prosperity and wealth, and the Dutch art blossoming over the land. The January of 1640 knew the beginnings of the diplomacies that freed the whole of the Low Countries, created the liberty of the United Provinces, and made an end for ever to all Spanish rule in the Netherlands. The Peace of Westphalia recognised in 1648 the independence of Holland, then allied to France. And during the sixteen-hundreds, though Louis XIV waged his unjust war against her and with barbarous cruelty, the Dutch were the richest and most vigorous and civilised people in Europe.

From the late fifteen-hundreds, then, the cleavage asunder of the Dutch from the Flemish became a thing of prodigious difference. Belgium remained Catholic and largely Spanish; Holland, free and Protestant. The Lower Meuse ran its great waters to the sea between two peoples now completely alien to each other. Flemish art and Dutch art thenceforth are as two languages apart. That to which the Flemish cleaved was the object of scorn and contempt to the Dutchman.

A wave of Protestant puritanism had swept over the

Netherlands—as fanatical as was the fanaticism of the persecuting Spaniard, whose Catholicism had created as black puritanism in Spain, that might well have put out the lamp of the Spanish genius. Indeed fanaticism ever breeds a hate that grows to equal fanaticism of enmity. This wave of Protestant puritanism had been but a part of the bitter religious hate against the oppressor; it reached its supreme madness in the acts of the calvinistic iconoclasts who in 1566 wantonly destroyed many of the religious pictures of the early Dutch School, whilst others were only saved by covering them with a coat of black and painting thereon the Ten Commandments. Quite apart from the obvious fact that this painting of the Ten Commandments had really as decorative, if more crude intention, as the pictures, it is well to remember that this Protestant puritanism would never have been directed against religious paintings if they had not been part of the decoration of Catholic churches. Thus were the childish spites and anger of men fantastically appeased by putting into mourning the Commandments that they set upon the altars of their faith.

Now, the Dutch had soon shaken off all allegiance to Rome—and, of a truth, Rome had treated them in rough fashion enough—by consequence, there being no demand for religious pictures any longer, the artists looked like coming to an end of their endeavour. The beautifying of the altars of their creed was thenceforth denied to them; the church-door was slammed in the face of such as wrought with the brush and palette and paint-pot. Their art had to turn, or by instinct turned, to the portrayal of the life of the people, to the glorification of the home and the rough humours of the tavern, to the fields, to the painting of pastorals and of cattle, to the decoration of the town-halls (that stood for the centre of civic strength and

the stronghold against tyranny) with large civic groups of prominent citizens knit together by the guild-fellowship or comradeship in war, and to portraits for the houses of the well-to-do.

The long and bloody war with Spain separated the northern and southern Netherlandish people, as with a sword. The year 1609, Rembrandt being a child of three, saw the twelve years' peace signed that made of the Seven United Provinces of the North a State apart—it created Dutch painting, and henceforth the Dutchmen created an original and national art such as had never before been wrought in Christendom.

Art came into a Holland, however, which in the sixteen-hundreds was a splendid soil for its growth and blossoming. Wealthy and industrious, proud in her strength, though the church doors were shut upon her, the art of painting was thereby rid of the worst foe to her creation—Holland was wholly free of the taint of Academism.

The very factor that had created art in Italy—the Church—had been the worst threat to the art of Spain and of Flanders. Velazquez had calmly evaded the Church—the churches in Spain hold few of his works—he did exactly what the Dutch did, he painted the portraits of the great and the life of the people. It was exactly in painting for the Church that the Spanish art fell into mediocrity. To Flanders, however, came the great Flemings who either discarded the Church, or wrought religious pictures which are nothing more than an excuse for sheer realism, and are almost wholly lacking in all spiritual intensity.

But Holland was saved from the hypocrisies.

The high narrow houses, not over well lit, called for

small pictures; the great town halls called for large portrait-groups of the officers of the guilds; by consequence the Dutch artist had free hands for his native genius in portraiture, for his love of the fields and cattle and flocks and pastoral life, for his junketings and merry-makings at the tavern, for his life as lived in the more cultured and lordly drawing-rooms. The result was that he came to grips with life; that by instinct he realised art to be the communion with his fellows through the faculty of colour of his sensing of life. He never made the Italians' mistake of pedantry in confusing the senses with the intellect; or of trying to strain the colour faculty to utter the province of the intellect which is outside its realm. Of necessity he had to develop a superb skill of craftsmanship, which he concentrated on the perfecting of his true artistic utterance, untainted by endeavour to strain the resources of the art of painting into literary or other artistic functions. And to him Art unveiled the emotion that is aroused in us in the presence of the dewy morning, or which envelops us in the warm fellowship of the genial sunlight; the sweet sadness of the twilight it was granted to him to interpret, and the loves and sorrows, the humours and the sadnesses of life became a part of his dowry.

And because his art was pure, pedants apologise for him even as they praise him—this one because he "lacks ideas," that one avers that his art consists in his "execution and the handling of his colours," which were as though one said that Beethoven's significance lay in the fingering of the strings of violins or the thumping of drums!

HAARLEM

Karel van Mander
1548 – 1606

VAN NOORT
1562 – 1641

Cornelis
Cornelissen
1562 – 1637-8

Van Laer of
Haarlem
1582 – 1642

F R A N S H A L S
1580-84 – 1666

Avercamp
1585–1660-63

Dirk Hals
1591? – 1656

Pot
1585–
1657

C. de Vos
1585–1651-61

A. van
der Neer
1603?–1677

A. Palamedes
1601 – 1673

P. Palamedes
1607 – 1688

Pieter
Potter
1597–
1652

Pieter
Codde
1600–
1678

Verspronck
1597 – 1662

Duyster
1600 – 1635

Kick

Van Delen
1605 – 1671

Molenaer
1605 – 1668

BROUWER
1605 – 1638

Asselyn
1610 – 1660

ADRIAEN
VAN OSTADE
1610 – 1685

D: Grebber
1610 – 1665

De Jonghe
1616 – 1679

P. WOUVERMANS
1619 – 1668

Van Beijeren
1620 – 1675

Bega
1620–
1664

Isack
van Ostade
1621 – 1649

KALF
1622 – 1693

PAUL POTTER
1625 – 1654

J. Berck-
Heyde
1630 – 1693

Hockaert
1629 – 1699

Roestraeten
1630?–1698

E. van
der Neer
1635 – 1703

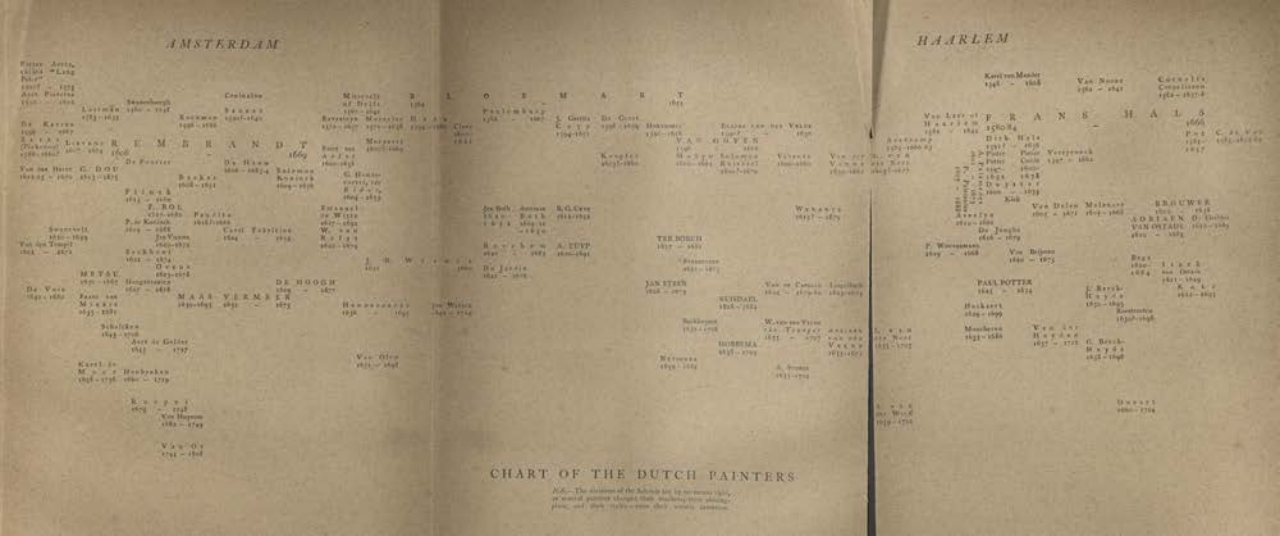
Moucheron
1633 – 1686

Van der
Heyden
1637 – 1712

G. Berck-
Heyde
1638 – 1698

A. van
der Werff
1659 – 1722

Dusart
1660 – 1704


AMSTERDAM
HAARLEM
REMBRANDT
FRANS HALS
CHART OF THE DUTCH PAINTERS

THE GREAT DUTCHMEN

1600

CHAPTER I

WHEREIN THE YOUNG DUTCH PAINTERS AT THE COMING OF THE SIXTEEN-HUNDREDS, GOING INTO ITALY, DISCOVER THERE A NEW REVELATION OF VAST SIGNIFICANCE FOR HOLLAND

THE YOUNG DUTCH PAINTERS DISCOVER A NEW REVELATION OF VAST SIGNIFICANCE FOR HOLLAND

The end of the fifteen-hundreds, as we have seen in the early Netherlandish endeavour, had brought the Italian Mannerism into Flanders, and threatened destruction thereto. Nor had the Dutchmen wholly escaped. But the Dutch instinct was too virile, and far too alien to the Italian ideals, to suffer much loss in mimicry. Raphaelism made no overwhelming conquest.

We have seen, at the end of the Italianised Mannerism of the Flemish painters, a few Dutchmen coming under the Italian glamour, though their Dutch realism kept them from the surrender of the Flemish men. Amongst these was Mierevelt of Delft.

MIEREVELT

1567 – 1641

Michael Janse Mierevelt was born at Delft, whence Mierevelt of Delft. Clear and warm in colour faculty, Mierevelt painted with truthful vision and in simple fashion the many portraits that remain to bear witness to his good qualities. Delft is rich in him. The large *Archery* group thereat, painted in 1611, was outside his powers; but his *Hugo Grotius* and his portraits of children proclaim him a

THE GREAT DUTCH-MEN

master. The Louvre, Dresden, Munich, and Amsterdam all hold fine works from his hand. He came to fame as portrait-painter, and to wealth as Court-painter to the House of Orange at the Hague. Of Mierevelt's pupils were his son PETER MIEREVELT, and the more famous PAUL MOREELSE, JAN VAN RAVESTEYN, and WILLEM VAN DER VLIET (1584-1642).

MOREELSE

1571 – 1638

PAULUS MOREELSE—born at Utrecht, where he also died—by his workmanship so closely resembles that of his master, that his portraits are often mistaken for those of Mierevelt. A typical portrait by Moreelse is the dainty little lady with the high white ruffle, who sits fondling her dog, as *The Little Princess* at Amsterdam, where also are a *Shepherdess*, a *Frederick of Bohemia*, and a *Mary of Utrecht* (1615) by him. Berlin has an excellent *Portrait of a Lady*, dated 1626. Moreelse died a couple of years before death took Rubens.

JOHANN WILHELM DELFT, who painted the *Archery* group at Delft in 1592, is of this time—made free of the Guild at Delft in 1582.

But a mightier art than any that Mierevelt of Delft or his pupil Moreelse knew was about to come out of Holland, though it was to be created by the hand of another pupil who, like Moreelse, may have worked in Mierevelt's workshop if gossip speaks true—one who was to lift the achievement of Dutch art to the heights to which Rubens was lifting the Flemish art across the Rhine to the south, and to surpass even the "prince of painters" in dexterity of craftsmanship, in skill of hand, in truth of searching vision, and in forthright utterance of the wizardry

of his brush; for if there were ever eyes that saw the truth without bias, or were utterance incapable of false witness or of affectation, they were the eyes and voice of Dutch FRANS HALS. He stands amongst the supreme painters of all time—the peer of Rembrandt, of Velazquez, and of Titian. But of the Italian vision not a hint. Before, however, we turn to this great Dutchman, let us complete our survey of the Dutch painters who were touched by the Italian intention when Hals came to purify art in Holland.

THE YOUNG DUTCH PAINTERS DISCOVER A NEW REVELATION OF VAST SIGNIFICANCE FOR HOLLAND

Such stiff Italianising, as had come flitting into Dutch art, was to have short shrift. What the Dutch student who went into Italy was to bring back with him in these days was to be of far different stuff from the art that Raphael knew.

The realistic instinct of the Dutch wanderer into Italy was far more attracted by the aims and fierce naturalism of Caravaggio, and the frank truthfulness of the creator of the Tenebrosi, and his astounding mastery of chiaroscuro, to say nothing of his battle-cry against the mimicry of other painters; his call to go back to Nature rang like a bugle in a Dutchman's ears. Let us first glance at the Italianised Dutchmen.

BLOEMART

1564 – 1651

In 1564 had been born ABRAHAM BLOEMART, who was to die in 1651, and live his life without any great artistic achievement; but he was to train several pupils who, whilst they did not reach to great careers, were to influence or father a great genius or so. Of these pupils was ANDRIES BOTH (1612-1650), whose younger brother JAN BOTH (1610?-1652) having been 'prenticed to his father,

THE GREAT DUTCH-MEN

a painter on glass, was also sent thereafter to Bloemart's workshop—Jan Both was to go to Rome, and became famous for his golden Italian landscapes markedly under the influence of Claude Lorrain. Another pupil of Bloemart was JAN BAPTIST WEENIX (1621-1660), who afterwards went to Italy. Another pupil was JACOB GERRITSZ CUYP (1594-1652 ?), of whom we shall see more when we come to his greatly famous son, Albert Cuyp; and under Bloemart also was trained WYBRAND DE GEEST (1590-1659). But of Bloemart's pupils who went to Rome, the most remarkable was.

HONTHORST
1590 – 1656

GERARD HONTHORST, born at Utrecht in 1590, was pupil to Bloemart; but Italy saw him enthusiastically turn to the aims of Caravaggio, and he was soon one of the Tenebrosi. Honthorst caught the notice of the great in Rome, and painted much for the Marchese Giustiniani amongst others. His taste ran towards pictures of the night, hence his name of GHERARDO DALLE NOTTI (Gerard of the Night). About the time of his visit to Rome the doctors differ; however, on coming back to Holland, he opened a painting-school which gathered many students to him; nor was he idle, for he poured forth works which so greatly spread his name abroad that Charles I called him to England, where he painted portraits and several historical decorations for the Banqueting Hall at Whitehall during the six months in 1628 that he was at the Court. He went back to Utrecht heavily rewarded, to enter the service of Prince Frederick Henry of Orange, whose House in the Wood, near The Hague, and whose castle at Ryswick, Honthorst decorated with many works. He also painted

a series of pictures for the King of Denmark. As he grew older, Honthorst gave up his wide range of subjects—the sacred and historical works, allegory and mythology and everyday life, that he had poured forth in such abundance from his studio, and betook himself almost wholly to portraiture. A fine draughtsman, with a rare sense of arrangement, and with a strong sense of light and shade, he handled paint with force and reached to considerable heights. His portraiture, odd to say, he wrought in a far earlier style, more akin to the art of an earlier day.

THE YOUNG DUTCH PAINTERS DISCOVER A NEW REVELATION OF VAST SIGNIFICANCE FOR HOLLAND

The Sutherland *Christ before Pilate* is adjudged one of his masterpieces in strong light and shade; Berlin holds his *Deliverance of Peter*; the Louvre has his *Triumph of Silenus*, as well as a *Musical Party*. His most famous portraits probably are the *Elector Charles Louis* and *Prince Rupert* at the Louvre; a fine *Mary de Medicis* at Amsterdam; and the Hampton Court *Queen of Bohemia* (daughter of James I) and the celebrated *Family of the Duke of Buckingham*. The collection of Lord Craven is said to hold the largest number of portraits by this brilliant Dutchman.

Honthorst had a younger brother, WILHELM HONTHORST (died in 1666), who came to considerable repute, painting at the Court of Berlin; many of his portraits belong to the Prussian royal family.

POELEMBERG
1586 – 1667

CORNELIS VAN POELENBURGH, or KORNELIS POELEMBERG, born at Utrecht, became pupil to Bloemart, went to Rome, was influenced by Elzheimer, and went over to the Italian elegances. He painted small landscapes with bathing women, and often bearing the tag of a Scriptural name—and he painted them with considerable charm of colour.

THE GREAT DUTCH-MEN

The Louvre has his *Annunciation to the Shepherds*, which is of his best endeavour; the National Gallery his *Ruin, with Women Bathing*. His works are scattered over many galleries. Of his followers were JOAN VAN DER LIS, MOSES UYT-DEN BROECK, FRANS VERWILT, C. KUYLENBURG, and DANIEL VERTANGHEN.

JAN VAN RAVESTEYN
1572 – 1657

RAVESTEYN, pupil to Mierevelt, is best seen at The Hague, where are his masterpieces of the *Twenty-five Arquebusiers of the Guild of St. Sebastian*, the *Banquet of Fourteen Town Councillors and Nine Officers of the Guild of Arquebusiers*, painted in 1618, and his *Twelve Members of the Town Council seated at a Green Table*, painted in 1636.

Ravesteyn's daughter married ADRIAEN HANNEMANN, whom we have seen going to the English Court of Charles I and becoming an imitator of Van Dyck.

JORIS VAN SCHOOTEN, born at Leyden about 1587, painted in 1626-28 large portraits of the *Archers* for the hall of the Civic Guard at Leyden, in the style of Ravesteyn, and his work was probably known to the young Rembrandt.

We have seen working at Amsterdam in the fifteen-hundreds the painter PIETER AERTZ, or Aertsen, known as "Long Pieter," who was born about 1507 and died in 1575. Of his three painter sons, the one who came to highest achievement was AERT PIETERSZ (1550-1612) (or AERT PIETERSEN), whose best-known masterpiece is the *Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Sebastiaen Egbertz*, signed and dated 1603, which was afterwards to inspire Rembrandt, close on thirty years later, to his famous *Anatomy Lesson* (or *School of Anatomy*) at The Hague.

THE YOUNG DUTCH PAINTERS DISCOVER A NEW REVELATION OF VAST SIGNIFICANCE FOR HOLLAND

CORNELIS CORNELISSEN (1562-1637-8), who was born at Haarlem, and there died, though he also worked at Antwerp and journeyed through France in 1579, was master to a host of pupils. He painted religious, allegorical, and mythological subjects. He it was who, with Van Mander, the artist and historian of the Dutch painters, set up a school at Haarlem which was to have a wide influence on Dutch art.

DE KEYSER
1596 – 1667

Born at Amsterdam, and pupil to Aert Pietersz, was THOMAS DE KEYSER, the son of an architect and sculptor. De Keyser was to have a considerable vogue as a portrait-painter; his portraits show a sound training, if they run somewhat to formality. It is interesting to find De Keyser, in 1619, painting, like his master Aert Pietersz, an *Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Sebastiaen Egbertz*, whom Pietersz had painted in a portrait-group of the same subject in 1603. And we shall see Rembrandt following out the same idea in a still more famous work later on. Amsterdam, besides the *Anatomy Lesson*, holds De Keyser's *Pieter Schout*, one of his last portraits; and The Hague has his *Burgomasters of Amsterdam*, painted in 1638. The National Gallery *Merchant with his Clerk*, signed and dated 1627, is typical of De Keyser's formal style. It is strange to think that Aert Pietersz and De Keyser influenced the young Rembrandt. De Keyser died at Amsterdam in the summer of 1667.

A. LION signed in 1628 a large group of twenty-five *Archers* in the Town Hall of Amsterdam.

CHAPTER II

WHEREIN IS DISCOVERED A WORLD-GENIUS STEPPING OUT OF A POLICE-COURT SCANDAL

FRANS HALS

1580? – 1666

THE GREAT DUTCHMEN

SUDDENLY, in the early sixteen-hundreds, appeared in Holland, in the town of Haarlem, a man who was to create an art so completely Dutch and so completely great that he arrived as though out of the blue. That man was an aristocrat; yet he steps before us out of an ugly police-court scandal, his name Frans Hals. He is to become one of the half-dozen painters of the supreme achievement—perhaps as painter, if not as colourist, the greatest of them all. No man ever employed the brush with greater power.

Frans Hals was no saint; and the tavern knew him well. The earliest record of him is in the March of 1611 as father to a son, Herman, at thirty-one; the next is not a pretty one—he was summoned before the city fathers on the twentieth day of the February of 1616, being then about thirty-six, for ill-treating his wife, Anneke Hermansz, who died a few months thereafter; nor does her short married career read like a happy one, since Hals only got off the consequences of the charge with a severe reprimand from his judges on condition of shunning drunken company and reforming his manner of life. Anneke was scarce a year in her grave before Frans Hals married Lysbeth Reyniers; and that none too soon, for to her was born, within nine days after, a daughter, Sara. This second

I

FRANS HALS

1580? – 1666

DUTCH SCHOOL OF HAARLEM

"FRANZ HALS AND HIS WIFE"

(RIJKS MUSEUM, AMSTERDAM)

WHEREIN IS DISCOVERED A WORLD-GENIUS STEPPING OUT OF A POLICE-COURT SCANDAL

marriage was to be as happy as the first was unhappy; the verdict on Frans Hals therefore depends not a little on the temper of poor unhappy Anneke; and as to whether she were a trying body with whom to live, the deponent sayeth not. The justices at least cast the blame upon Frans Hals; and they ought to have known. There is no hint that it was a case of "first give him a fair trial, and then hang him"; nor is there proof that it was not. Justice in Holland was wearing a long face and black steeple-hat in those days, and Frans Hals was careless of the proprieties.

Hals was now thirty-six; and his repute as painter must have been higher than his credit as husband and good citizen, for he painted the famous *Banquet of the Officers of the St. Joris Doele*, or *Arquebusiers of St. George*, in 1616, the year that poor Anneke died.

Little is known of his early life, save that it has a riotous beginning in the mouths of gossips. But some guess at it we can make.

Frans Hals came of patrician stock, of a family long prominent in Haarlem, its members holding important offices in the magistracy. Hals's father, Pieter Claesz Hals, was of the magistracy; he was in Haarlem during the terrible seven-months' siege of 1572-3, when the heroic Kenau Hasselaer and her three hundred women defenders made the siege of Haarlem as immortal as the sieges of Jerusalem and Saguntum, as the women were in after years to make the siege of Saragossa; but that he was a commander is little likely, since the Spaniards put every defender to the sword in one of the most brutal butcheries, even in their foul record, in the Low Countries. But evil times fell on the man, as indeed it fell in the shape of Spain upon all Haarlem; so that with his good wife, Lysbeth Coper, he got a-packing in the spring of 1579, near upon a year of

THE GREAT DUTCH-MEN

their wedding-day, and sought a new home in Mechlin, where some of their kin were settled; thence they made for Antwerp, where others of their kin were settled; and at Antwerp, late in the year of 1580, was born to the couple a son, whom they christened Frans Hals, and as "Frans Hals of Antwerp" he was to be known throughout the long years of his superb artistic achievement.

The boy Frans grew up to youth and edge of manhood in Antwerp city; and in Antwerp, centre of artists, he took to painting. But from whom he learnt the mysteries no man can tell. Yet we can make shrewd guess. The after-art of Frans Hals reveals something of the secret.

Some three years younger than Rubens, we know that the youthful Hals had small choice of masters in Antwerp. It was no great period for painting that was to bring forth Rubens in Flanders and Hals in Holland, to create the splendour of the sixteen-hundreds. The Italian spectacles were being worn. From the Italianised Flemings the lad Hals clearly learnt nothing, unless to mix paints. To whom then was he apprenticed? who taught him to despise alien art and speak his native tongue? There was one man in Antwerp fitted for the task of training Rubens and Hals—we know that he trained Rubens; it is almost sure that he alone guided Hals to his mighty conquest. ADAM VAN NOORT was a great teacher, if a somewhat scandalous fellow—rough of life and of tongue he may have been, and Netherlandish art sadly needed it; proud of being of the people, he scoffed at the Italian journey, smashed the Italian spectacles, and with blunt phrase and dogged will he cursed the Italian vice that was falling on the native art, and thundered at his pupils to paint the people of their own race and to look upon them with Netherlandish vision. He painted with force, he stood for

WHEREIN IS DISCOVERED A WORLD-GENIUS STEPPING OUT OF A POLICE-COURT SCANDAL

vigorous colour, he called for strong light and strong shadow as holding power of artistic utterance. Adam van Noort created the glory of Flanders and of Holland in the sixteen-hundreds. Rubens served his dandified life to him for four long years; Jordaens served his apprenticeship to him, and married his daughter; Sebastian Vranckz and Van Balen were his pupils. Thereby Van Dyck and Snyders both owed their art to him. But of them all the man who fulfilled his commandments, and who put into achievement the teachings of forthright Adam van Noort, was Frans Hals. Van Noort saved Rubens and Van Dyck from the Italian burning; but only saved them. Frans Hals he moulded and wrought to utter the purest native artistry. If Frans Hals learnt in Van Noort's schooling an ugly habit of the bottle and rough ways, at any rate he learnt also a craftsmanship, and to him were revealed the mysteries of an art, that set him amongst the supreme painters of all times.

And if we reject Van Noort, then we must fall back on miracles. It has been the habit to speak of Frans Hals's indebtedness to Rubens—he owed Rubens nothing, not a tittle. There is no man but Van Noort to whom he owes aught. Rubens, having learnt the dandified habits of a page, may have gone to rough old Van Noort with nose in air; but he held to him for the four years from 1599. As we shall see, Rubens went to Van Noort about the time that Frans Hals was to be done with Antwerp for ever. In 1600, or shortly before, the Hals family with Frans Hals went to Haarlem, the city of his forefathers; and at Haarlem Frans Hals thenceforth wrought his destiny. There had been born in 1591 a brother to Frans, Dirk Hals, who was to become his pupil.

It has become a tradition that Frans Hals, who was

then about nineteen, on going to Haarlem on the edge of 1600 entered the studio of Karel van Mander; if so, he was done with his schooling by 1604, since Van Mander left Haarlem in that year, dying at Amsterdam in the September of 1606, a couple of years afterwards. But what Frans Hals was doing in the studio of the man who is rather famous as the historian of the Netherlandish painters than for his art, it is difficult to discover—yet Rubens went from Van Noort to Vaenius! However, VAN MANDER (1548-1606), a cultured man of noble family, and CORNELIS CORNELISSEN (1562-1637-8), both Italianised painters, had a school at Haarlem; and being the chief school, Frans Hals may have passed some reckless years thereat. From Van Mander's and Cornelissen's art he certainly learnt as little as from Van Mander's wisdom for 'prentices in art, for there must have been fine laughter in the studio when the lads read the "Avoid taverns and bad company. Have a care that you never say where you are going. Be courteous, and avoid brawling. Rise early and get to work. Have a care of frail beauties!" But whether reckless or industrious we know not; the life of Frans from 1600 to 1611 is an absolute blank, until the parish register sets forth the baptism of his son Herman, whereby we know that he married at about thirty the ill-starred Anneke Hermans or Hermanszoon. Frans Hals again withdraws into the fog of silence for five years, until on a cold day of February (the 20th) in the year of 1616, the Haarlem records, in cold official bluntness, set down the reprimand of the justices upon him for beating his wife and keeping drunken company. Again a year of silence; and the bald official scribe records, on the 12th of the chill February of 1617, the marriage of Hals with Lysbeth Reyniers, and nine days thereafter the birth of a daughter

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Sara, the first of many children, born to the happy couple in the Peeuselaarsteeg.

But if Frans Hals made the tavern shake with laughter of an evening, and led the riot, by day at any rate he must have lived his young manhood at Haarlem in prodigious industry. In the year of 1616 wherein Anneke laid her down and entered into eternal peace, Frans Hals painted his first known work, the twelve portraits of the great *Banquet of the St. Joris* (*St. George*) *Shooting Company*, that hangs in the Town Hall of Haarlem, wrought with such power and revealing an astounding art such as comes to no man without stupendous exercise in the craftsmanship of his most difficult art. For a long time the only reputed work of his hands, before this, is the vanished portrait of the minister, *Johannes Bogardus*, which Jan van de Velde's engraving, made in the year that Hals painted his *Banquet of the St. Joris Shooting Company*, has handed down to us. But paintings begin to be discovered that are the work of his earlier years—the Warneck portrait of *Dr. Pieter Scherijver* in Paris, signed F. H., and dated 1613, is wrought almost in black and white. Druivesteen, the Burgomaster of Haarlem, encouraged the young fellow, and often sat to him. The portrait of *Professor Jan Hogaarts* of Leyden is assigned and dated 1614. In the Banquet piece Hals steps before us an artist completely armed, his craftsmanship completely mastered; what the eye sees, the hand can with swift and unhesitating power record. He was to advance to mightier achievement far beyond this; but all hesitancies are flown.

These great portrait-groups, called "Doelen," from Doele, a shooting-butt (being the pictures of the officers of shooting-guilds or companies), were the picturesque groups of the banded soldier-burghers who, originally formed

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into archery clubs, had become in the days of Hals members of arquebusier-clubs; and of their great military value the Spaniards learnt a hard lesson. When not at war, the guilds had shooting-tournaments, and made merry at banquets; and the officers from time to time had their portraits painted and presented to the guild. We have seen Ravesteyn tackling the difficult problem of these groups; but there was come out of Haarlem a greater than Ravesteyn.

These great and important Doelen groups, then, were become the fashion before Frans Hals came to Haarlem. There were other eminent painters at work upon them. But, mark well, this one was given to Frans Hals; therefore to an artist chosen from amongst his fellows. He must have proved his powers on many a canvas before these shrewd Dutchmen laid their money upon the order. Hals was clearly, at thirty-six, a painter of high repute. The works that he wrought are either vanished or hang to the credit of lesser men. But in the St. Joris group we see at once that, from the men that went before, Hals clearly learnt little. It was from Van Noort's teaching, which the young Hals wrought into achievement, his eyes set upon reality as he lived his rude Dutch life away from all Italian vision, that the young fellow hammered out the splendid truth of life as he saw and felt it round about him, and created the splendour of the art of Haarlem.

It is fortunate that at Haarlem are two other Doelen pictures of the Guild of St. Joris, painted about a decade apart—the second is of 1627, the third of 1639. Indeed, the Audience Hall of the Haarlem Town Hall holds eight portrait-groups by Frans Hals—five shooting-groups, and three *Regenten*-groups of governors of almshouses. In all of them, as in all his long and great career, whilst he

advanced from triumph to greater triumphs, the great artistic aim of the man is clear from the beginning. He sets himself the supreme difficulty—character. He is not content to pose a figure and paint it still—he compels his art to record the action of the man, the play of feature, the atmosphere in which he stands steeped; he is not concerned with inventing attributes of dignity and the grand manner; he paints the life of the man. He realises that art has nought to do with beauty.

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To the year 1616, that saw the first great *Banquet of St. Joris*, belongs also the famous Northbrook portrait of *Pieter van der Morsh*—he was the beadle of Leyden—known as *The Herring Seller*, on the wall behind whom has been printed in Dutch "Who'll Buy?" America has another painting of 1616, *The Merry Trio*, of which the copy by Dirk Hals is in Berlin.

The Guild system seems to have been the very breath of life to Holland. And wine-drinking had to have its guilds, like any other industry. The Guild of the Rhetoricians Frans and his brother Dirk would seem to have entered in 1617; and as it was a merely social drinking-club for the jollifications of artists, the rhetoric probably flowed freely enough as the wine got in. The "fellows" or comrades of the club enrolled themselves in the Civic Guard, to which in 1618 entered also Frans and Dirk Hals.

Hals was now pouring forth portraits, for his subjects are but portraits disguised, of fisher-folk and rich folk—and important folk—burghers and their wives and families. In these single portraits, as I think, he reaches always to his best powers. The Doelen groups limited the scope of the man—the colonel or chief of the officers had to be centred, the others took important post according to their subscription for the portrait. The dandified young ensign

THE GREAT DUTCH-MEN

with the colours gave the artist a little chance of drawing the group together; and Hals used him to his full bent. But with the single figure he was at his full strength and wrought some of the supreme portraits of all time.

He who glances at Hals's development in art will find exactly the same advance towards impressionism that we saw in Velazquez. At first the portraiture of each figure is treated separately—the realism, intense and compelling, is concerned with detail. As he advances in mastery he sees the object as a whole, and reaches to superb impressionism. It is the habit of critics to speak of Hals with a certain detraction in relation to Velazquez. Hals is the absolute peer of Velazquez. Velazquez had certain qualities that Hals lacked; Hals had qualities that Velazquez could not touch. To compare them is sheer pedantry. They stand foot to foot. Each discovered that realism was not in detail—each reached forward to atmosphere, to lighting, and, in the supreme fulfilment of their art, to impressionism.

Hals was now in wide vogue for portraits. During these years of what are called his first phase, his two famous portraits at The Hague, the two great and famous portraits of 1620, *Dutch Nobleman* and *Noble Lady*, being man and wife, now at Cassel, and the stupidly titled *Laughing Cavalier* in the Wallace Collection, may be taken as types of the phase.

To about 1622 belongs his half-length *Portrait of Himself*, possessed by the Duke of Devonshire, in which we see Hals in all the strength of his manhood, something of a dandy, richly arrayed and prosperous. About 1623 he painted the so-called *Portrait of Himself and Wife*; and in 1624 the famous *Portrait of an Officer*, stupidly known as *The Laughing Cavalier* at the Wallace. They who so

christened the Cavalier missed the whole significance of Hals's great art in character; for the conceit and consequence of the man have caught Hals's eye, and he has rendered the whole significance without mitigation. It is difficult to know why this painting holds the esteem of the critics as one of Hals's supreme masterpieces, however, for he was to leave it far behind. Hals was also painting jovial groups at this time—the *Merry Supper Party*, and the drinking groups at The Hague and other places. The painter was thoroughly in the vogue. Sitters poured into his studio. To name all his portraits would be mere cataloguing.

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To 1625, and the years thereabout, belong many of the *Singing Boys* and *Singing Girls* and *Mandolinists* and *Flute-Players*, and several *Jolly Topers*, that we may see at Haarlem and Brussels and Berlin, at Cologne and Cassel, and at Königsberg. And it was in 1625 that Hals painted the pair of fine portraits in his early manner of *Jacob Pietersz Olycan* and his wife, *Aletta Hanemans*.

To these, the years of his forties, as we have seen, belongs the well-known Amsterdam portrait-group of *Frans Hals and his Wife*, when Hals was prosperous and in wide favour.

Berlin has two portraits of men, of the year 1627—the *Young Man in the Violet Cloak*, and the *Johannes Acronius*; with a portrait of a *Young Woman* of about 1625, and a *Nobleman* of the same year.

On the edge of fifty—about 1629—Hals painted the superb portrait of *Nicholas Beresteyn* and the famous *Madame Beresteyn*, now at the Louvre, which gallery also holds the group of the *Beresteyn Family* (1630), in which a figure of a boy has been added by another hand.

Earl Spencer has a so-called *Portrait of Hals* by him-

THE GREAT DUTCH-MEN

self, and the fine three-quarter-length so-called *Admiral de Ruyter*.

Eleven years after he painted his first Doelen group of 1616, in his forty-seventh year, Hals was again engaged to paint two Doelen pieces—the second Doelen group of eleven officers of the *Guild of St. Joris* (St. George), and the twelve *Officers of St. Adriaen's Guild*, both painted in 1627. Here Hals is seen advancing towards general impressionism, the figures are less picked out in detail and are set back into their proper depth of atmosphere; and Hals boldly records the values of colours as though he wrought a single figure. Luminosity is increased. Cleaning, unfortunately, has not left these great groups as Hals painted them; but we can imagine the first glory of them. Hals painted all these Doelen pieces at a grave disadvantage—each man wanted to be to the front in his best array and to be given prominence in proportion to payment and rank.

MIDDLE PERIOD (Golden Period).

Berlin possesses a famous picture of 1630, Hals's fine portrait of the *Nurse and Child*, painted in black and gold and white, and astir with life, in spite of the arts of the restorer.

Haarlem holds the two portraits of *Albert van Nierop* (by some called *Nicolas van der Meer*) and his wife *Cornelia van der Meer* (sometimes called *Cornelia Voogt*), painted in 1631.

In the year 1630, Hals being fifty, were wrought the so-called *Gipsy Girl* (*La Bohémienne*) at the Louvre; the *Jolly Toper* at Berlin; the Buckingham Palace *Portrait of a Man*; the *Willem van Heythuysen* (or Man with the Sword) at Vienna; and the portrait of a *Young Girl*, said to be of

II

FRANS HALS
1580? – 1666

DUTCH SCHOOL OF HAARLEM

"THE LAUGHING CAVALIER"

(WALLACE COLLECTION, LONDON)

Should be called "Portrait of an Officer." Why, and how, it gained its present title, no one knows. On the back of the canvas—"Aeta Suæ 26 A°. 1624."

the Beresteyn family, at Haarlem. Brussels has another portrait of *Van Heythuysen*, seated.

WHEREIN IS DISCOVERED A WORLD-GENIUS STEPPING OUT OF A POLICE-COURT SCANDAL

Hals at fifty, then, is about to enter upon his larger and more powerful second manner. Baron Gustav Rothschild possesses, at Paris, the *Jolly Mandolinist* (called also *Der Naar* and the *Lute-Player* and the *Fool* and the *Buffoon* and the *Jester*), of which Amsterdam has the copy by Dirk Hals. Here in this *Jolly Mandolinist* we are said to have the portrait of Hals's pupil, Adriaen Brouwer, a favourite of the great artist, and one who was to come to fame in his paintings of the habits and life of the vulgar. Brouwer would seem to have been a practical joker of a pronounced kind, up to every devilment, and an excellent musician. He is supposed to be singing to some girl in a window. Though the painting is often given to 1625, we see in it the change of Hals's style towards a broader and more masterly touch. A far finer work is the Louvre *Gipsy Girl* (*La Bohémienne*), the paint flowing and direct, the brushing consummate, the life created with marvellous wizardry of skill.

From about 1630 to 1640 Hals was the first painter in Holland; his position was without rival; and he was at the height of his powers. Painting in a golden atmosphere, working with tremendous force and direct from the sitter, without sketch or preparation, he employed a full brush in a fashion that has never been surpassed.

It was in the June of 1630 that Van Dyck, being at The Hague, engaged on painting various princes, and the guest of Frederick of Nassau, Prince of Orange, is said to have paid a visit to Haarlem, and asked Hals to paint his portrait without discovering himself; the which Hals, having been dragged out of a tavern, promptly did in a couple of hours, whereon Van Dyck, delighted with the power of the thing,

asked Hals to let him try and paint him, as it seemed an easy business. Hals, on seeing the work, realised that his sitter could be none other than Van Dyck. "You must be Van Dyck—or the devil," said Frans Hals.

Van Dyck is said to have tried to lure Hals to England to the court of the king; but Hals preferred Haarlem and his tavern.

It is a common criticism concerning Hals to say that he only "painted the external outer man"! If any man painted character it was Frans Hals. It is a common fallacy to speak of him painting low types. As a matter of fact, his *Portrait of a Dutch Nobleman* at Cassel is about as typical of the noble class as any portrait ever painted.

Of 1633 is a masterpiece, the head and bust of a *Man* at the National Gallery; close by hangs the marvellous portrait half-length of a *Woman*—unforgettable works. Of 1635 is the Bute *Portrait.* The Duke of Devonshire has a half-length *Lady in Cap and Ruff.* Edinburgh has a *Dutch Gentleman* and a *Dutch Lady*, both of about 1635 to 1640.

The Amsterdam *Merry Drinker* in the broad-brimmed hat, who holds a glass in one hand—perhaps the most widely known of all that Hals wrought, and painted with astonishing power, is of these great impressionist years. At Amsterdam also are the *Lucas de Clercq* and his wife *Feyntje van Steenkiste*, and the *Maritge Voogt Claesde.*

In 1633, in his fifty-third year, Hals painted his second great Doelen group of fourteen portraits of the *Guild of St. Adriaen*, and in 1639, his fifty-ninth year, his third great group of the *Guild of St. Joris* with its nineteen figures. He had painted in 1637 at Amsterdam, where Rembrandt was at his full powers, the *Company of Captain Reynier Reael* (called also *La Compagnie Maigre*), or rather began it, for it was finished by Pieter Codde. In 1641, his sixty-first year, he

III

FRANS HALS

1580 ? – 1666

DUTCH SCHOOL OF HAARLEM

"THE JOLLY MANDOLINIST (DER NAAR)"

(Collection of Baron G. Rothschild, Paris. A Copy by Dirk Hals in Rijks Museum, Amsterdam)

Portrait of one of Hals' favourite pupils, Adriaen Brouwer, renowned for his musical gifts and practical jokes. His nickname in the studios was "*Der Naar*"—"Funny Man!"

painted his famous group of the *Five Regenten of the St. Elizabeth Hospital*, an almshouse for old men. It reveals the pure mastery of greys that Hals wrought without rival.

WHEREIN IS DISCOVERED A WORLD-GENIUS STEPPING OUT OF A POLICE-COURT SCANDAL

It is one of the fatuities of what is called "expert criticism" to attribute influences of one painter upon another. There was painted by Frans Hals in 1639 a portrait of *Maria Voogt* (or Van der Meer), now at Amsterdam, which has set up a theory that, from 1635 to 1643, Hals was influenced by Rembrandt. But it is such a painter as Frans Hals who brings all this pedantry crashing to the ground. It is usual to add to the "proofs" the Bridgewater *Old Lady* (1640), the *Regents of St. Elizabeth Hospital*, and the two Frankfort portraits.

But the simple fact is that in 1630 Hals has arrived at complete mastery of impressionism. Until eighty he creates the supreme art of his long life. At the end of the first decade, 1640, he still further reduces his palette, and relies on black and white, and his wonderful brushing, to create the impression. He becomes, as the handler of paint, the supreme painter of his age.

LAST OR SILVERY PERIOD

At sixty-four, in 1644, Hals was at the height of his powers, and that his fellows realised it is proved by the fact that he was a director of the Guild of St. Luke. Thenceforth he climbs down the hill towards misfortune and penury and neglect, to end in the doles of charity. His patrons fell away, and he must have been glad of the school to add to his means of struggle against want. To him, amongst others, came Brouwer and Ostade to learn the mysteries. Then the school went to rack and ruin. Indeed, by 1641, he was already in arrears with his subscription

to the Guild of St. Luke. At Haarlem is a *Head of Hals*, painted by himself in his sixties, in which poverty is confessed—the gay clothes have been laid aside.

Yet from 1640 he increases in the magic of his powers!

The year 1641 had seen Hals completely master the atmosphere, the play of light and dark, the mysteries from blacks to greys, to whites, towards which his genius moved from his earlier strong colours in raiment and in flesh. From 1641 he employed a very narrow gamut of colour besides black and white, which dominate. The colour harmonies that he wrought therewith by sheer mastery of handling are a marvel.

In 1645 he painted the *Jan Hornebeek of Utrecht*, a professor of Leyden, now at Brussels, almost violent in the force with which he rendered the sanctimonious sensual face. Of this same year was the *Jasper Schade van Westrum* at Prague. In 1650 he painted the astounding *Woman with the Gloves* (La Femme au Gant), at the Louvre, of which the hands are a miracle of artistic achievement. He had painted the Louvre *René Descartes* before this. Lille has his *Laughing Girl* of 1645.

The great Malahide *Family Group* at the National Gallery is said to be of about the year 1650; and in 1650 Hals painted his famous *Hille Bobbe* (Alle Bobbe), or *Witch of Haarlem*, now at Berlin. He rejects gay colours, and developed his skill in the rendering of greys with black shadows in 1641; and at seventy we see him painting the *Hille Bobbe* in the extreme of this style with great skill. His employment of black is marvellous. This fishwife of Haarlem, pewter flagon in hand and owl on shoulder, is painted with rare power. The paint is slashed on to the canvas in swift unerring strokes that build up and create the impression of the grinning woman in unforgettable

IV

FRANS HALS

1580? – 1666

DUTCH SCHOOL OF HAARLEM

"FAMILY GROUP"

(NATIONAL GALLERY)

Painted in oil on canvas. 4 ft. 11 in. h. × 8 ft. 4½ in. w. (1·498 × 2·55).

fashion. Yet there are those who apologise for the blacks! At Dresden is *Hille Bobbe* again, with a youth looking over her shoulder as she stands at her booth or stall.

WHEREIN IS DISCOVERED A WORLD GENIUS STEPPING OUT OF A POLICE-COURT SCANDAL

Hals was now quite out of the public favour.

Seventy years of age, his works henceforth are all too rare. Berlin has the *Tyman Oogdorp* of 1656; the Hermitage a few portraits of men; and the tale is near complete. But through all is revealed the firm, unerring hand's skill; the swift stroke that creates illusion as by magic; the same mastery of impressionism. Neither empty larder nor the pang of winter's cold can break the will of Frans Hals, or drive him from the mighty revelation that art is not to please, not to pander to petty enjoyments, nought to do with beauty, but the communion of life, the utterance of the thing felt through his vision.

His great art is out of the fashion—nay, are not the Ostades, Steen, De Hoogh and the rest of the men who see life small, are not they come into the vogue whilst he starves? So be it. But whatever sins Hals sinned, whatever his weaknesses or backslidings, he never once stooped to debauch his art or to betray his genius. And the world let him starve for it.

By 1652, his seventy-second year, his baker, Jan Ykess, put in a distress warrant against him, and the inventory of the old man's possessions may be read to this day at Haarlem. The home was bare enough—three mattresses and bolsters with the rest of the belongings of a bed; an oaken table, an armoire, and five pictures do not make for splendour. Four years later, in 1662, Hals was to apply to the Town Council for help against dire want, and to receive 150 florins.

The tide of favour fast ebbed from him. By 1655 the old man had scant employment—indeed from 1655 to 1660

THE GREAT DUTCH-MEN

it is calculated that about six portraits can with certainty be spoken of—and they are not of the great folk of Haarlem. The Cassel *Man in the Slouch Hat* of 1660, for all its astounding mastery, was probably the portrait of a man who paid no high fee. It could not have brought much warmth in the winter to the old couple; and eight years had gone by since baker Ykess had seized the household gods.

Hals was eighty the day he painted the *Young Man in the Slouch Hat* at Cassel, who, elbow over the back of his chair, looks at you over his shoulder. Think of it! The man who could flog this thing on to canvas until the figure leaps into life, was eighty years of age!

Thereafter, a gap of four years—four years in which the old artist knew little but the most ghastly want and penury. Then he paints two great groups before he goes to his grave. What his sons and daughters were doing for the old couple during these years is not known.

In the spring of 1664 the town had to come to the old artist's aid, granting him three loads of peat for fuel to keep the cold out of his poor home, and a pension of 200 Carolus gulden. The order for the last two Regenten groups that he now painted was likely enough a part of the city's charity. So, in 1664, his eighty-fourth year, the aged Hals painted his two last great groups—the famous two *Regenten* pictures of the *Five Governors of an Old Man's Almshouse*, and the *Five Women Governors of an Old Women's Almshouse*. The astounding artistry of these works by a man in his eighty-fourth year do not uphold the tales of his drunkardy. No man could have wielded a brush with such firmness and power whose hand had been shaken by toping as well as old age. Indeed, they not only hold the pathos of old age in the sitters, but around

WHEREIN IS DISCOVERED A WORLD-GENIUS STEPPING OUT OF A POLICE-COURT SCANDAL

them gathers the pathos of a neglected and penurious old age in the great artist who wrought them. When Hals had created the famous Regenten groups in 1641, at sixty-one, he had been in the full height of his career; the twenty odd years thereafter had seen him pass down the decline of the hill of fortune.

By the time that old Hals took brush in hand to make his bread in that eighty-fourth year, the hand's skill begins to fail, but what marvellous cunning of skill for eighty-four! The grim charity of the old ladies seems to haunt the old man with something approaching fear, yet the humour of the man wins over his shrinking.

Two years after the old hand set the last touch upon those two pictures, death stole into the bare home of the old couple on the 29th of August 1666, and took the breadwinner. Frans Hals was buried on the first of the September in the choir of St. Bavon Church at Haarlem, and the sexton was richer by four florins thereby; and there sleeps Frans Hals, under a nameless stone, with the great ones of his great city.

His old widow lived on for ten lonely years, a pauper, the weary old hands held out once a week for fourteen sous —sevenpence, as we should say—that the town granted to her.

Thereafter, the art of Frans Hals fell into utter contempt. Davies puts it tersely in the phrase that his masterpieces "fetched furniture-prices." The Berlin *Acronius* was sold in Haarlem in 1786 for five shillings (three florins); the full-length *Willem van Heythuysen* (or *Man with the Sword*) at Vienna was sold in 1800 for fifty-one florins (four guineas). The Northbrook *Herring Seller* was bought at Leyden for fifteen florins (twenty-five shillings)! The supreme painter of laughter and jollity sold for a few shillings!

A HISTORY

THE GREAT DUTCH-MEN

A survey of the achievement of Frans Hals reveals the astounding grip of artistic fitness in the man. He paints a man in a vigorous, virile style, quite different from the delicate style in which he renders a woman. When he paints a "character" piece, how different is the handling again! how astoundingly every touch utters the type and personality before us, and compels the impression of it into our senses! No man ever surpassed Hals in the interpretation of the play of mood upon the human countenance. With what keen insight he rendered the inner character of men and women! just exactly what the pedants deny to him. With what clean eyes he saw the character of their hands! How he catches the characteristic pose! Compared with the art of Hals, a portrait by Rubens or Van Dyck sinks back into a convention—becomes the "fake" of a posed position.

Making no preliminary drawings or studies, Hals painted straight on to the canvas, of medium web, and with great force and rapidity, the thing he desired. In his early days he sometimes used panels. He loaded his brushes with fluid paint, and left the brush-stroke as it struck the canvas, without softenings or cross-paintings, and he painted if possible at one sitting. Employing an astounding craft, which his experience made unerring, he painted for a considerable distance of focus; and by consequence he trended to paint over life-size. What that skill was, you may see in the marvellous way he painted even a glove. His trick of a red line to separate the lips gives wonderful life to the mouth. Rejecting landscape and animals, Hals set his whole strength to the painting of the human—it was his sole interest. Of the Scriptures, history, and the like, he never thought. Hals was not a man of wide perceptions, of wide sympathies; but what he saw and felt, that he

uttered with a power that places him amongst the supreme artists of all time. To apologise for him as not being a "thinker" is to miss the whole significance of art. To deny him the "grace and charm" of Van Dyck is futile—he happened to be a far greater artist than Van Dyck, though this is not to deny grace and charm their place in art. One might as well deny him the theatric splendour and rich colour of Rubens, the dignity and colour harmonies of Velazquez, the deep rhythmic cadence and resounding orchestration of Rembrandt, or the scent of flowers, or the fluidity of waters, or the tang of a Dutch cheese; but what has all this to do with it? Hals was a giant in art, who can never be surpassed in his own realm. He was not above these others in their realm, any more than he was greater than Napoleon or Julius Caesar or Mahomet or Beelzebub in theirs. Nevertheless he was a supreme artist. A man of supreme genius in his art, he brought genius back again to the Dutch achievement. He rid Dutch art of Italian spectacles, and purified the Dutch utterance so that it faltered with no alien lisp. Perhaps nothing could blazon forth the futility of "expert criticism" more than the pedantry that sets down Hals's use of black and white, as his art developed, as a result of his poverty. It is almost incredible that when Colonel Warde's superb *Family Group*, now gone out of the country, was shown in London, it was an object of apology for its employment of black! this, perhaps, the greatest group-painting that ever left Hals's studio.

WHEREIN IS DISCOVERED A WORLD-GENIUS STEPPING OUT OF A POLICE-COURT SCANDAL

Hals raised Dutch portraiture from the catching of a likeness to the might of a great art. Even Dr. Bode is guilty of the academic pedantry that "we are scarcely justified in ranking Frans Hals with the masters who touched the summit of perfection in the pictorial rendering

of the individual," and of the still more fatuous pedantry that Hals did not "give artistic finish to his composition"! If these things were said by a Board School child, we could pity him. The genius of Frans Hals lay in that he had the mighty sense to know when a work of art was complete. No amount of "finish" could increase the splendour of his wondrous achievement. Art does not lie in "finish," but in the power of its communion of a sensed impression. To deny the supreme quality of Hals to do this would be to write oneself down a dullard. Hals had nothing like the range of Rembrandt; nothing like his largeness of realm. In other words, neither Hals nor Velazquez was as great an *artist* as Rembrandt, but they were as great *painters*. As *artist* Rembrandt aroused a vast orchestration and a wide range of sensing, or emotions, such as neither of his other peers in painting ever attempted. On the other hand, Hals uttered a far wider gamut of human moods in his sitters than did Velazquez; but we cannot for that reason put Velazquez beneath Hals; indeed, it is a common critical cant to set Hals below Velazquez. This is all futile. These artists, together with Zurbarán, were peers as painters; and what one lacks the other may have. As artist, as poet, if you will, as he who played the mightiest instrument, Rembrandt is supreme. But this is not what critics mean by art, which they for ever confuse with craft. What Hals achieved at his best has never been surpassed by mortal hands. The Salting Collection has a portrait by Frans Hals of *A Lady* which it would be impossible to surpass in artistry. Even so respected a writer on art as Dr. Bode is guilty of the obvious fatuity that Hals utters his own temperament in all his portraits. If this phrase means anything, it is that all Hals's portraits are himself rather than the sitter. If there were one man

in the whole achievement of the world's art who did not do this, it was Frans Hals. This critic seems to consider this faculty in an artist to be the attribute of "all great masters"! According to such a law, Van Dyck is the supreme portrait-painter. He finds in Hals's portraits a race of "strong passions, highly developed egoism, controlled by a keen understanding, piety, and patriotism." Hals does not utter these things to me; and had Dr. Bode not read his history, Hals's art would not have said them to him. Hals was not concerned with these things. He found no piety in *Hille Bobbe* or the *Gipsy* or the *Merry Drinker*. But that he does not attempt it is shown by the simple fact that every Dutch man and woman was not exactly like every other. In fact, Hals was a great artist; and he was concerned with character. Nor are Hals's large portrait-groups his supreme achievement; they are far from the "highest expression of his art." Nor, had Hals made the "most ill-favoured wench" and the "most hideous drunkard" "attractive," would he have been an artist.

WHEREIN IS DISCOVERED A WORLD-GENIUS STEPPING OUT OF A POLICE-COURT SCANDAL

Hals was one of the greatest humorists who ever put brush to canvas. His sense of comedy is prodigious. He had the joy of life; a great, rich, deep sense of the splendour of creation.

In the famous Kann Collection were two portraits of young men—the *Young Man*, and the young fellow in a hat called *Young Koeijmanszoon van Ablasseedam*, painted in 1645—which are simply astounding in their power; it would seem almost impossible for man's skill to go further than in these marvellous things. In the same collection was a *Dutch Lady*, painted in 1644, that is amongst the immortal things wrought by the hand of man. The *Syndic* of the same collection is another masterpiece of 1643. These four "heads and shoulders" are a marvel; and nothing else

could more flatly give the lie to the gossip that has set up Hals as a chronic besotted drunkard, than the unerring force, directness, and sureness of touch of these supreme works wrought in his sixties.

When Van Mander left his Haarlem School in 1604 —he died in 1606—it was carried on by Cornelissen and Goltsuis until they left Haarlem, when its doors were shut. The students were soon looking to Hals as master; and he opened a school in which he trained a large number of artists. Haarlem has a picture of the Life School by Dirk Hals, painted in 1652.

The six sons of Hals became painters—HERMAN HALS (1611-1659); FRANS HALS THE YOUNGER (1617-1669); JOHANNES HALS, 1625, died in 1650; REYNIER HALS (1627-1688?); WILLEM HALS; and NICHOLAS HALS (1628-1681). None of them came to distinction.

His younger brother DIRK HALS (1591-1656), whom he trained, came to considerable vogue for his paintings of cavaliers and merrymakings, of which the National Gallery *Merry Party of Cavaliers* is the type. Dirk Hals had as pupil PIETER CODDE (1600-1678); and Codde trained WILLEM CORNELIS DUYSTER (1600-1635), who painted soldiers and cavaliers at carouse or at fight.

Frans Hals had as pupils in his school or as disciples, besides his sons, ADRIAEN BROUWER (1606-1638), and ADRIAEN VAN OSTADE (1610-1685), of whom we shall see more later; JAN CORNELIS VERSPRONCK (1597-1662); JAN MIENSE MOLENAER (1605-1668); PIETER POTTER (1597-1652), who became father to the greatly famous Paul Potter; WILLEM CLAESZ HEDA (1594-1680); HENDRICK GERRITSZ POT. Pot, a favourite pupil of Hals, is the Lieutenant seated upon the table in the

second St. Adriaen Guild picture; PIETER MOLYN (1600?-1661); PIETER FRANS DE GREBBER (1610-1665); ANTONY PALAMEDESZ STEVAERTS; DIRK VAN DELEN (1605-1671); BARTHOLOMEUS VAN DER HELST (1612-13-1670); PHILIPPE WOUWERMANS (1619-1668); ISAAC VAN OSTADE (1621-1649); PIETER ROESTRAETEN, who married Frans Hals's eldest girl Sara, whom we have seen come into the world; VINCENZIUS LAURENSZOON VAN DER VINNE (1629-1702); and JOB BERCK-HEIJDE (1630-1693).

WHEREIN IS DISCOVERED A WORLD-GENIUS STEPPING OUT OF A POLICE-COURT SCANDAL

About Hals and his pupils many stories have grown up. He is reputed to have made them paint works which he sold to meet his tavern reckonings; whilst Brouwer, who lived in Hals's house, is said to have had a foul bed, little food, and less covering. Yet master and lads are shown to have been hail fellow, and on the best of footing! There is gossip of the lads bringing the drunken master from the tavern of a night, and putting him to bed.

CHAPTER III

OF THE FINE PAINTERS OF PORTRAITS UNDER THE REVELATION OF FRANS HALS

E L I A S
1588 – 1660?

THE GREAT DUTCH-MEN

THERE was born at Amsterdam in the last days of 1587 or first days of 1588—baptized, at any rate, early in 1588—one NICOLAS ELIAS, known as PICKENOY, who came to great gifts in portraiture, as his portraits at Amsterdam fully prove: the *Company of Captain Matthys Willemsz Raephorst and Lieutenant Hendrick Lauruensz in* 1630, is an early work thereat. He was not only a fine painter himself, but was to train Van der Helst.

VAN DER HELST
1613 – 1670

BARTHOLOMEUS VAN DER HELST, born at Haarlem, was apprenticed to Elias, but was soon forming his style on that of his great fellow-townsman Frans Hals. From Haarlem he went in young manhood to Amsterdam and there rapidly grew to wide repute, and wrought some of the finest portraits of his age.

His earlier style is seen in the *Vice-Admiral Kortenaar* at Amsterdam, in its direct stroke of the brush without melting of the colours into each other; and the two large *Archers* at Haarlem, in which he reveals his limited gifts for large composition. By 1640 he was complete master of his craft; and for twenty years—until 1660—he was

OF THE FINE PAINTERS OF PORTRAITS UNDER THE REVELATION OF FRANS HALS

one of the greatest portrait-painters produced by the genius of Holland. The National Gallery has a fine portrait of *A Young Lady*, said to be of the House of Braganza. Rotterdam has as fine a portrait of a *Pastor* of 1638; Amsterdam the large *Archers* of 1639, the famous *Celebration, at a Banquet by the Civic Guard, of the Peace of Westphalia* of 1648, and the great *Archery* group of four figures known as "het Doelenstück" of 1653, of which the Louvre has the small replica.

Van der Helst died at Amsterdam in 1670.

JOANNES SPILBERG formed his style on Van der Helst. He painted in 1653 the *Banquet of Twenty-two Archers*, in the Town Hall at Amsterdam.

ABRAHAM VAN DER TEMPEL, born at Leyden in 1622, became pupil to Joris van Schooten, but formed his style on Van der Helst. Berlin has a fine portrait by him of a *Man and his Wife*; Amsterdam three good portraits by him. He died in 1672.

LIEVE DE JONGH (or Ludolf de Jong), born at Overschie in 1616, and dying 1697, is also a follower of Van der Helst; Amsterdam has two good portraits by him, *Admiral van Nes* and his *Wife* (1668).

PIETER NASON (variously given the dates 1639-1680, and 1612-1691), went to the Court of the Great Elector at Berlin, where are his full-length portraits of the *Great Elector* (1667), and portrait of *A Man* (1668), with a *Still Life*.

JACOB GERRITSZ CUYP

1594 – 1652?

We have seen Bloemart training amongst his many pupils one JACOB GERRITSZ CUYP of Dordrecht, some

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fourteen years younger than Frans Hals, but creating his Dutch art alongside of the great Haarlem painter. The town of Dordrecht that bred Jacob Gerritsz Cuyp and his brother BENJAMIN CUYP (1612-1652), was not the creator of many artists. JACOB GERRITSZ CUYP, whose son was to bring such fame to the name, was a portrait-painter of power, whose warm colour and rich handling may be seen in the *Old Woman* at Berlin, painted in 1624; in a number of portraits at Amsterdam; a couple of portraits painted in 1649 which are possessed by Metz, and the portraits of a *Captain* and *His Wife* at Rotterdam which bear the dates of 1635 and 1644. The elder Cuyp was also a fine painter of landscape, in which he displays power and original vision, and to the handling of which he brought a broad forcefulness, a golden atmosphere, and a closer grip of Nature than had yet been shown in Holland. Admitted to the Guild of Dordrecht in 1617, he died in 1651 or 1652.

PIETER FRANS DE GREBBER (1610-1665), son of Frans Pietersz de Grebber, pupil to Frans Hals, wavered between the art of Lastman and Rubens and Rembrandt. His father had been the friend of Rubens. Dresden has portraits by him; and he painted religious subjects.

CHAPTER IV

WHEREIN, WITH THE GREAT DUTCH PAINTERS OF THE HOME LIFE UNDER HALS, WE RIOT AND DRINK AND WRANGLE AND SUFFER WITH PEASANTS

WHEREIN, WITH THE GREAT DUTCH PAINTERS OF THE HOME LIFE UNDER HALS, WE RIOT AND DRINK AND WRANGLE AND SUFFER WITH PEASANTS

It is amusing to read the apologies of bookish men for the art of the Dutch genius. It has become a cult to praise the high genius of Hals and Rembrandt—the obviousness of their grandeur compels homage, even if that homage be not sincerely felt. But so cast-iron is the homage to the Italian genius, which also, be it hinted, is not often sincerely felt, but has been created by reiteration of the printed word, that the astounding verity and pure art of the Dutch is ever swallowed with an apology. There is a sort of feeling abroad that, because a small panel was used, the Dutch art was not quite so great as the Italian. Then comes an idea that the life of the people could not give wings to the imagination like the Italian! But surely nothing has stirred the imagination of man like the story of a Child born in a manger amidst the lowing of kine, who, grown to manhood, did not disdain to ride in triumph upon an ass! "The limitations of this branch of art must exclude the noblest and loftiest thoughts to which man has risen, and end in merely catering for the intelligent, but not intellectual, curiosity of common folk," writes one of late. "Deep thought can rarely enter into the humdrum existence of those who are satisfied with *genre* painting.

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Such pictures will naturally be replete with close observation and teem with elaborate detail, which is not referred to a great end but is calculated to appeal to the eye rather to the mind." This is worthy of a German professor. Here is dogma laid down upon art by one who betrays the fact that he does not know the essential significance of art. Art has nothing to do with the intellect, but with the emotions, the sensing; nor has detail anything to do with great or small art. The primitives are adored for detail, later and greater artists are condemned for detail, by these very teachers who know not art. But to condemn as baser art what "appeals to the eye," and to set above it what "appeals to the mind," is comical; and all the more comical in that we shall find these very same writers condemning the French moralist painters, a little later on, for the very fact of their arousing moral emotions in home-scenes, and applauding Chardin for his high artistry in simply doing what they condemn in these Dutchmen! I say nothing even of the great Dutch school in landscape; great in that they uttered the real emotions they experienced in the presence of their home-scenes. For I flatly contradict, here and now, the pedant's affirmation that the life of the people "excludes the noblest and loftiest thoughts," quite apart from the vital fact of art that sensing, not thinking, is the province of art; the life of the people is a vast part of life; and the communion of feelings of life is the sole promise of all art whatsoever. Life is as mystic a miracle in the homes of the lowly as in the palaces of the great, or the nave of a cathedral. The life of a canary is as wonderful a thing as the life of a conqueror, a prince, a schoolmaster, or—a prig. To him who has imagination, the whole realm of life is intensely and compellingly wonderful; and majesty and sublime emotions

are everywhere. A pen-drawing may utter the immensities into our senses where an oil-painting the size of a cathedral may fail.

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There arose in the Netherlandish genius men who found miracles in the home—the laughter and blithe gaiety of comedy, the numbing despair and agonies of tragedy, the anguish of pain, the glamour of a sunlit room. They need no apology.

To seek Italian inspiration for the Dutch love of the Home Life, as is often done, were farcical. To speak of a "new movement" created by PIETER VAN LAER, born at Haarlem in 1582, who went to Rome until 1639, and there discovered the painting of fairs and all the rest of it, bringing it back to Haarlem to practise it until his death in 1642, and giving the revelation to his people, is to shut the book of the Dutch genius. The Netherlandish genius had always painted it from the beginnings; and though it is true that Bassano, and after him the Tenebrosi, went to the home-life, they were after the Dutchmen in their grip upon it. It required the democratic spirit of the northern peoples to bring it to birth and blossom. And if it came in rude fashion in its beginnings, it was from the Dutch that the French and English inherited it and brought it to splendour; that Millet compelled the imagination and reached to majesty and wondrous mystery in his home-scenes through the Dutchmen; that Meunier came into his kingdom. It was through its northern blood that the Spaniard painted the home-life; and it was exactly inasmuch as the Spaniard clove to the realism of the north that he came to power, exactly inasmuch as he borrowed the spectacles of Italy that he fell from power.

As a matter of fact, the Italians called Van Laer, this painter of fairs and rural scenes, BAMBOCCIO; they were

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new things, you see, to them, these Netherlandish paintings of fairs, creating the comment of a nickname!

The stupid phrase of "The Little Masters," at any rate, shall not disfigure the achievement of the great Dutch painters of the Home Life in these pages.

BROUWER
1606 – 1638

ADRIAEN BROUWER comes down to us enwrapped in myths and good stories, a rollicking, fantastic figure of a young fellow, ever in the midst of every devilment, his humorous, clean-cut face laughing at us out of many scrapes; a grim philosopher playing the dandy in a linen suit, which he paints with flowers so charmingly that all the ladies of Amsterdam run to their mercers to buy a piece of the pretty stuff from the same loom; a reckless, free-handed, merry-making scamp, who trips from his tongue, glibly and with a tang, cynical witticisms at the tavern, living his lawless day at such a pace that the fires of life burn out his body's strength at thirty-two, and a beggar's grave swallows the penniless remains of him in a pauper's funeral.

So they squabble as to whether he were born Dutch or Flemish; but the place of birth matters how much? Dutch he was in vision, recklessly Dutch, as he was in training and pupilage, and above all in his art. Netherlander let us call him, for certainty's sake. Whether born at Dutch Haarlem, or Flemish Antwerp, or Flemish Oudenarde, born he *was*, and in 1605 or 1606. He ran away from his parents, a mere boy, to start upon the frantic adventure of his fantastic, wilful life.

We have seen him become apprentice to Frans Hals, playing pranks upon his master when Hals was in his cups,

and Frans Hals painting him, mandoline in hand, singing to attract some wench in a window. From Hals employing his brain and hand to make money for the tavern's merry-makings, Brouwer ran away to Amsterdam, where he was soon making a name for himself as painter of those scenes from the life of the people that so tickled his whimsical fancy and have brought him immortality.

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Brouwer is one of those artists who to-day threatens to become a demigod such as he was not; and there lies danger in the exaggeration, lest he shall one day fall thereby below his deserts. That his art is of "the highest artistic perfection," and "deserves to be spoken in the same breath with the greatest painters," could only have occurred to bookish writers upon art. But he was a genius nevertheless, and he uttered through his skill of painting the humorous impression of the life of the people, its comicalities and its sordidness, its pain and its debaucheries, with power. And if his vision of life were narrow and his art scarce versatile or widely ranging, Brouwer at least saw low life with a truthful eye, and recorded its impressions with swift and dexterous skill.

Brouwer had left Hals by or before 1625; he had gone to him about 1621, his fourteenth year, and was with him in 1623. He was early leading a wild life. By nineteen, besides being the talk of Haarlem studios for his mad doings and witty fooling, he was an artist of repute; by twenty-one he is written of as being "far-famed Adriaen Brouwer, painter of Haarlem." In 1626 Brouwer wrote a short poem praising his praiser—he was elected to one of the clubs of rhetoric at Haarlem in that year. He had been in Amsterdam in the March of 1625. And he was clearly a friend of actors and writers of the day. His bare lodgings were scarce his dwelling-place—he but slept and

worked there on occasion—his home was the tavern. He saw life as it is lived in the tavern. He breathed the atmosphere of the tavern. His loves were the women of the tavern. His acts and his manners and his way of life, the conduct of the tavern. But the tavern he painted with astounding skill—its broad humours, its base quarrels over pint-pot and cards, its vile and brutal strife and fights, its grim sordidness, its rollick and its free-handed spendthrift habits. "Indolent in painting, quick in spending," is his epitaph. He had to pay the reckoning—for that alone he created his art. To the end he kept the affection of all those to whom he gave his friendship, yet his borrowings must have tried the patience of a saint. They forgave the droll fellow many sins and shabby clothes for his delightful humour. Tall and handsome he was, as Van Dyck's art bears witness; holding himself proudly, his ready wit and quick eye saw quickly into passing things. His easy, good-humoured tongue knew no malice; and a generous heart went with a ready hand to give and to help. *Farceur*, ever ready to play any part in any comedy, a droll teller of good stories, an excellent talker, he won friendship at every turn. He was his only enemy. Above petty conceit, outside vanity, he was a simple-hearted man, and wore that heart upon his sleeve for all to share. But with his open contempt for forms and ceremonies and honours, went an august pride in his art. Though in direst want, because his creditors thought to traffic on his necessity and haggled with him for the price he asked, beating him down, he took the drawings that meant sustenance to him and flung them into the fire, watching them pass into smoke with anger in his eyes. To one mistress he was faithful—his art. By consequence his achievement increased in power, snapped in twain only by the accident of

his all too early death. The tavern was his studio—he mostly painted there. He began life by running away from home, went a-mumming with the travelling theatre folk, and then roughed it as a young soldier at Breda, the surrender of which Breda Velazquez was to immortalise in *The Lances*. His training was in the tavern, and he was early the lover of frail women.

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Amsterdam holds two paintings by him wrought in these early years in Holland, after he learnt the mysteries from Frans Hals—and they prove that Brouwer had looked upon the art of Peasant Breughel, Pieter Breughel the Elder. Peasants play bowls or dance at the fair with soldiers and loose women, or make merry or quarrel in the tavern. He was soon the vogue, drawing for the engravers. His early works were widely copied; these copies of the lost *Peasants' Dance*, the *Dance in the Barn*, the *School*, the *Wedding*, show the coarseness of inquisitive and unrestrained youth—they prove also how shallow was the Puritanism of the people. Mannheim has Brouwer's *Charlatan*; Amsterdam his *Quarrel* and tavern scenes, of which several are in private collections at The Hague, in Philadelphia, in Amsterdam, and elsewhere—and always the humour is coarse, with the loutish, thick-set figures running to caricature.

Wheresoever born, all gossips agree that he was a wild, reckless, plaguing joker of a youngster, a wild-cat, adventurous dog, ever ready for any mad prank. "Robbed at sea by the enemy," according to the gossips, he escapes with what he stands in, appears at Amsterdam, and, taking to paints and palette, wins a wage with his brush. It was at Amsterdam that he leaped upon the stage of the theatre at the play's ending in his suit of prettily painted flowers that had become the rage, and there before the audience he

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wiped off the pretty design with a wet cloth in each hand to show the vanity of human splendour.

From Holland the restless fellow carried his Dutch art in the winter of 1631 into Flanders, to Antwerp, where dwelt some of his kin, and was promptly arrested for wearing Dutch clothes, or, as others say, for arriving without a passport. But that his fashion of clothing signified at all is quaint, since he was notorious for the untidy and ragged garments he wore. Indeed, dandified ways seem to have fretted him, for, appearing in splendid attire at the wedding of a nephew in Antwerp, he was so disgusted at the admiration it drew from the assembled guests that he took up a dish and poured the gravy all over himself, vowing that he had been asked for his clothes, not for himself; and throwing his fine costume into the fire, he walked out "to join his real friends—at the tavern."

At Antwerp he entered the Guild of St. Luke in that winter of 1631-2, in which he arrived thereat; and at Antwerp he was to live the rest of his short life. He was scarce entered upon the books of the guild of painters when a pupil is recorded, a lad of fourteen. And, be it noticed, Brouwer comes to Antwerp with a high reputation as artist. By the 4th of March 1632, Brouwer in the presence of Rubens affirms officially that he has only once painted a *Peasants' Dance*, then in the hands of Rubens this twelve months past: thus he arrives at Antwerp, his works sought by the greatest collectors, and receiving high prices. Yet, at the end of this same year, an inventory of his home is taken out by a creditor, and reveals that bare home, his scanty wardrobe holding but a pair of breeches, a black taffeta coat, another trimmed with silver, a black cloth cloak, a belt and dagger, three black caps, two hats and two pairs of sleeves—whilst of linen but a collar, five cuffs, and

no shirt to put them on. The very tools of his art but a glass of colours, a dozen brushes, and a lay figure. Five pictures, a dozen engravings, and eight books were his besides, with *a map of the siege of Breda*! whereby hangs suggestion.

In the February of 1633 Brouwer was a prisoner in the fortress of the castle of Antwerp, not where debtors were sent, but the stronghold of the Spanish garrison—therefore a political prisoner. The Dutch art of his clothes may have roused the dark suspicion of the Spaniard, but that map of Breda was a more dangerous possession; at any rate he was still a prisoner seven months thereafter. The map of Breda may have done it—perhaps he had fought for the Dutch at the siege in 1625; loud Dutch talk in the tavern may have done it, or drinking perdition to Spain. Perhaps it was from Breda that he had escaped, rather than from the sea, that year he appeared at Amsterdam. At any rate, a prisoner he was in the February of 1633 when he signed away all he possessed to one creditor, a generous patron, Van den Bosch, a rich silk-merchant, to "prevent its seizure by another creditor," Brouwer undertaking to pay off his heavy debt month by month from the March next in paintings to the value of 100 florins a month. Later in September he was still a prisoner, and signing away more of his work to cover Van den Bosch's paying for his keep in prison, some 500 florins, which means about £400 of money to-day, which Brouwer had spent freely in the taverns of the fortress where Spanish wines were free of duty, and carousers were many. The baker to the Spanish garrison, Aart Tielens, with his son JAN TIELENS, the landscape-painter, lived in the fortress, boon-companion to Brouwer, whilst Tielens's niece was married to Joos VAN CRAESBEECK (1606-1654?), who stepped into the old

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baker's shoes after his murder, and was a hot admirer and worshipper of Brouwer and his most brilliant pupil. And the Spanish soldiery were a wild, drunken gang, quick with the knife, and a thirsty folk. This fortress was really a little town apart in the city, where the Spanish garrison lived secure from the Flemish people.

The Spaniards soon discovered that there was little of the spy in Adriaen Brouwer; and he must have been allowed to go free towards the end of the year—old Van den Bosch's florins, likely enough, by freeing Brouwer from the tradesmen in the fortress, opened the gates to him. At any rate, on the 26th of April 1634, Brouwer went to the house of Rubens's engraver, worthy Paul du Pont, for board and lodging; and thereat, in the Everdijkstraat, he probably lived the greater part of the rest of his life, adapting himself to his friend's more orderly way of life, and conducting himself in the presence of Du Pont's young wife. It is to his credit, and the credit of Du Pont who took him into his house, and of his hostess, the pretty young wife who presided over Du Pont's orderly home, that they inspired such conduct in him that at least when he dwelt under their roof he could trim his day to their higher ordering. Whilst with the Du Ponts he seems to have lived part of his day in the society of the more reputable artists and taken part in their banquets and social life. Here he came into closer touch with his admirer Rubens, then all-powerful, who took him for a short while into his own house, but had to send him back to Du Pont owing to his disorderly life. Always in debt, Brouwer seems to have paid all creditors with paintings; and it was probably through Du Pont that Rubens came to possess seventeen of Brouwer's pictures, which always brought a high price, and were never to be bought direct, but were

the payment of loans all too readily advanced for their possession by the keenly contesting collectors of the day.

These years from the winter of 1631 to 1633 show Brouwer advancing rapidly in his craftsmanship, and his vision more keenly alive to colour and brilliancy. Trained under Hals, he kept the Dutch aim, and developed the Dutch lesson, wholly untouched by the Flemish aim with its classical tendency to create type rather than character; indeed, his Dutch vision for character so far from being baulked by the vogue for Rubens at Antwerp, increased its Dutch inquisitiveness for character just exactly when he left Holland and made his home in Flanders. Antwerp has his *Card Players*, the Louvre has several small tavern scenes, as have Frankfort and Vienna, together with scenes of those uncouth surgeries in barbers' shops in which Brouwer's grim humour delighted. Munich has the *Barber's Shop* and the *Fight*, all dramatic, catching the sensations desired with rare power, which arouses the grim sensation in our feelings so that we almost flinch from the barbers' surgeries. His command of light and shade has the Dutch dramatic instinct. He develops the intention revealed to him by Frans Hals, from whom he has caught the power of uttering the mood of the act as it passes on the wing.

From 1633 to 1636 he rapidly creates the art of what is called his middle period; these three years show him advancing from the thickly painted, enamel-like style of his early method towards his last style in which he painted almost in monochrome, and the brushing is light and boldly swept. His grip of character is now very sure. Munich is rich in these works—the subtly handled *Players*, the *Quarrelling Card Players*, the *Brawl at the Cask*, the rapid sketch of *Five Fighting Peasants*, the series of the *Five*

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Senses; Dresden and the Liechtenstein possess small caricature heads; Berlin and several collections in Paris hold the scattered series of the *Seven Deadly Sins*; several collections in England have scenes from low life; South Kensington the *Lute Player*; and other galleries such pieces as the *Village Notary*. And always, whether fighting or merry-making or under the crude surgeon's knife, Brouwer's humour keeps him from morbid intention. To this period also are due his superb landscapes in which the poetic sense of the man finds its purest utterance; and in landscape he steps into the front rank of the Dutch masters. He rids his vision of all alien aid, wears no Italian spectacles, but paints the impressions aroused in his senses by the moods of Nature in consummate fashion.

At once Light yields him her mysteries, and his hand gives forth the wizardry of the aerial leagues over low sand-dunes and stunted bushes of the wayside, and the stunted trees behind which the low-lying villages nestle; and he painted these things with a breadth of touch that has been a lesson to the generations. The Berlin *Landscape with a Shepherd*, the Vienna *Two Peasants on the Dunes*, and the Brussels *Landscape* forestall the great achievement of the Barbizon men with their mastery of clear daylight, as in moonlight does the Berlin night-piece, and the like command of utterance of coming storm and the fall of twilight in other works of these poetic years, not least of all the superb Bridgewater *Landscape*, set in a painted stone framework that Seghers decorated with flowers, the dunes beyond which the thunder-clouds roll up in mighty threatening. Berlin has small *Landscapes with Peasants playing Bowls*; and Grosvenor House the large landscape of *Sunset* that is given to Rembrandt.

From 1634 to 1637 Brouwer was shining in the brilliant

literary and artistic gatherings of Antwerp; but he lived his painting day in the taverns, rollicking amongst the wilder brethren; and the tavern-lords loved the man, and were good friends to him after their crude fashion.

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Van Dyck had come over to Antwerp in 1634, and painted Brouwer for the engraving, and exchanged with him probably for a picture, his triple portrait of Charles I, now at Windsor. The February of 1635 saw Brouwer assigning this triple head of *Charles I* by Van Dyck, together with a picture by Joos van Cleef and one by himself, to his friend Du Pont in payment of a loan and for board and lodging. In the summer of 1636 Brouwer adds two friends to his circle—JAN LIEVENS, who had come from England to settle in Antwerp, and the immortal Dutch painter of still-life, JAN DAVIDSZ DE HEEM, who was come to the city from Utrecht.

In the last two years of his life, 1636 and 1637, Brouwer passed to his "last style," in which colour gives way to those grey subtleties of tone, and the brushing is firm, light, sweeping, and broad. He now trends towards larger works and increased breadth of touch, both in figures and landscape, the backgrounds thinly painted with a flowing brush.

In this last phase Munich is very rich—the *Singing Peasants*, the *Soldiers playing Dice*, the smaller *Sleeping Host* of the tavern, the large *Host coquetting with a Glass of Brandy*. The Hague has the *Smokers*; Haarlem the *Tavern*; Frankfort the *Operations*, and the young man making a wry mouth at the *Bitter Draught*; the Louvre *The Smoker*; the Natural History Society of New York the *Young Man examining a Piece of Money* by evening light; and The Hague a little *Portrait*, said to be of Brouwer himself. The pupilage to Hals stands out clearly in the master-work of these

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last years, in handling, in humorous grip, in touch, in breadth, and in colour sense.

In the early days of 1638 the Plague came to Antwerp and raged throughout the city. It entered the town at the end of the bitter January, it stalked into a tavern where Brouwer sat, and beckoned to him, ill-fitted by his wild career to resist assault. But death came quickly; and the smitten body was hurriedly taken by the Carmelites and shovelled into a grave to which no friends were called to mourn, and without ceremony, on the first day of February, in the painter's thirty-second year.

As his works are small, never dated, and rarely signed, their history is difficult. The Bridgewater Collection has his *Landscape*, long given to Rembrandt, the figures by Daniel Seghers; Dulwich has his *Interior of an Ale House*, and the Wallace his *Boor Asleep*. Munich is very rich in him, possessing seventeen panels; the Louvre five pieces.

Thus end Brouwer's seven years in Flanders. That his lack of industry was rather a gossip tale than the fact is proved by at least a hundred known pictures painted in these years. But as he rarely dated his works, the sequence is largely guess-work from the development of his style.

Painting landscape with pure Dutch vision and haunting poetry, and the life of the lower classes in its traffic of the tavern and its sufferings at the hands of the barber-surgeon and the physicker with grim humour, his libertine wayfaring seems to have failed to utter the glamour of women. He found in the life of peasants a more frank attitude towards his day than in the more conventional atmosphere of the upper classes; and he caught the right dramatic moment of the mood desired with consummate judgment, so that he makes his age live in a series of impressions of

the people that created a vast school which is not the least part of the glory of the Netherlandish genius. Teniers owed him a heavy debt in Flanders; and the Dutchmen, from his fellow-pupil at Hals's studio, Adriaen van Ostade, owe tribute to him. His grip of character was great. And as each character plays his part, Brouwer so compels his art upon us that we feel the emotion as though we stood in the presence of each—whether some suffering peasant suffer under the lance of the village surgeon-barber, or a musician create music in our hearing, or a drunken reveller feel the blow of a pint-pot on his skull. His whole art is very Dutch.

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A large group of lesser artists were influenced by him —and of younger painters of his own time, Both and Saftleven and A. van Ostade looked upon his craftsmanship. The greatest artists of his day paid high tribute to his genius; Rubens possessed seventeen and Rembrandt eight of his paintings. He received large prices. One pupil alone was entered upon the books of his guild, a mediocre fellow, JAN BAPTISTE DANDOY, son to Brouwer's tavern-lord and friend and heavy creditor, drunken Jan Dandoy. Joos VAN CRAESBEECK, his so-called pupil, probably was pupil in casual fashion, watching him as he painted in the taverns. But the work of his hands was the teacher of Holland and of Flanders for close upon an hundred years. David Teniers we have seen subject to him—indeed, their works are often mistaken the one for the other. Other Flemings, the two Ryckaerts, and Gonzales Cocx owed much to him. The Dutchmen DER QUAST, BLOOT, and DE HEER, with others, from whom he had learnt, in their turn learnt from him. CORNELIS SAFTLEVEN of Rotterdam, and HENDRIK SORGH of the same city, were his disciples, as were ADRIAEN VAN OSTADE, DIAPRAEM, P. VERELST,

HEEMSKERK, JAN STEEN, BEGA, and DUSART. His influence was very great and very wide—and he died at thirty-two!

ADRIAEN VAN OSTADE

1610 – 1685

Adriaen Ostade, born at Haarlem in 1610, was early apprenticed to Frans Hals; and the fellowship of Brouwer soon led him towards that interest in the life of the peasantry which is the keynote of all his art. Free of his pupilage to Frans Hals, he was painting in Haarlem the subjects to which he devoted his career.

But Adriaen van Ostade, soon after he ended his apprenticeship, came under the glamour of Rembrandt, and developed the cool colour and vigorous style of Hals into a warmer hue, and added strong light and shade to his craftsmanship. He trends towards types rather than towards character.

Ostade's earliest-known works are of 1631. Berlin has the *Man with the Hand Organ* of 1640. The National Gallery *Alchemist* is of 1661.

In 1662 he was president of the Guild at Haarlem.

A prolific painter, he took for subjects just those tavern scenes and the agonies of the surgeon-barber's shop in which Brouwer so delighted. It tickles one to read the apologies that writers pour forth on these paintings of peasant life—as though the peasant were too low to come between the wind and their respectability. His flesh-tints are generally the sign of his development—he began with light golden clearness; later it changed to a rather ruddier clearness, probably to be attune with his warmer schemes and dark violet dresses; at the end the cooler tones and less luminous shadows appear. The largest number of his works are in England. Fortunately, like Rembrandt, he

V

ADRIAEN VAN OSTADE

1610 – 1685

DUTCH SCHOOL OF HAARLEM

"THE ALCHYMIST"

(NATIONAL GALLERY)

Signed and dated 1661 on a wooden shovel which hangs on the wall.

Painted in oil on wood. 1 ft. 1½ in. h. × 1 ft. 5½ in. w. (0·342 × 0·444).

dated most of his works. Ostade rarely mastered the sense of balance between his figures and their surroundings so remarkable in the Dutch masters. The Louvre has his *Schoolmaster*. The finely lit and richly painted *Artist at his Easel*, of 1663, is at Dresden.

Ostade made a large number of drawings and of etchings, for which he is famous. His industrious life came to an end at Haarlem in 1685.

Ostade trained besides his younger brother, ISACK VAN OSTADE, CORNELIS DUSART (1660-1704), CORNELIS PIETERSZ BEGA (1620-1664), whose *Philosopher* is in the National Gallery.

ISACK VAN OSTADE

1621 – 1649

Isack van Ostade, the younger brother and pupil of Adriaen van Ostade, was born at Haarlem in 1621. He was doomed to a very short life, dying in 1649, in his twenty-eighth year.

He began by painting interiors with peasants, in imitation of his brother; but he early developed his personal vision, and painted the out-of-door village scenes with men and animals, his landscapes and frozen rivers with figures, for which his art is prized. His industry equalled that of his brother; more than a hundred works by him are known. Like his brother's work, most of his pictures are in England, and those in foreign galleries given to him are often forgeries, and of a weak kind. His art is perhaps somewhat monotonous. The Louvre has a *Carrier and White Horse at a Tavern*, the *Halt of Travellers at an Inn*, and the *Frozen Canal*. Amsterdam has the *Two Travellers with White Horse at an Inn*. The National Gallery has a *Man on*

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a White Horse, a *Street Scene*, and a *Scene on the Ice*. Lord Northbrook has a *Frozen Canal*.

ANDREAS BOTH (1609-1650) painted in the manner of Isack van Ostade. His brother, JAN BOTH, we shall see painting landscape, of which the figures and animals are by Andreas.

HENDRICK MARTENZ ROKES, called ZORG or SORGH, born at Rotterdam in 1611, dying in 1670, is said to have been pupil to Teniers, but founded his style and took his subjects from A. van Ostade and Brouwer.

CORNELIS SAFTLEVEN, born at Rotterdam in 1612, painted subjects akin to the two Ostades, and delighted in poultry and still life. He was also an etcher.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

CHAPTER V

WHEREIN WE WALK ABROAD OVER THE LEVEL LANDS OF HOLLAND WITH THE EARLY POETS OF LANDSCAPE WHEN THE SIXTEEN-HUNDREDS WERE YOUNG

WHEREIN WE WALK ABROAD OVER THE LEVEL LANDS OF HOLLAND WITH THE EARLY POETS OF LANDSCAPE WHEN THE SIXTEEN-HUNDREDS WERE YOUNG

In its very beginnings the Dutch art was concerned with landscape.

The Netherlandish art of the Van Eycks treated landscape backgrounds with realism. And in the Northern achievement, where the Dutch early began to show a vision apart from the Flemings, we have seen ALBERT OUWATER of Haarlem, famous as a *landscape-painter*. GEERTGEN TOT ST. JANS and LUCAS VAN LEYDEN had been remarkable for their employment of landscape, as had Bosch, and PIETER BREUGHEL was as much Dutch as Flemish. The fierce war with Spain in which the Dutch won and the Flemings failed, saw the Protestant Flemings emigrate to Amsterdam, and there were landscapists amongst them—hence there was something of the Italian atmosphere even in landscape-painting in Holland by the end of the fifteen-hundreds. But the Dutchmen were too vigorous to surrender their vision. The truce of 1609 with Spain set aflame the pride of the Dutch in their freedom, and blithe sunlight bathed the land. The sand dunes, the sea and the canal, the mysterious shadows of the woodlands, held the imagination; and the native genius leaped to utter the poetry of the moods aroused thereby.

The Italians, fired by the Netherlandish genius that

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penetrated to Venice, had rapidly during the late fifteen-hundreds concerned themselves with landscape. By 1600 there was a considerable activity in this realm that the Tenebrosi further accentuated. In the early sixteen-hundreds the Frenchmen Nicholas Poussin and Claude Lorrain went to Rome, and such Dutch artists as forgathered in Rome came under their spell. Rubens and the Flemings were keenly interested in landscape.

In Holland a group of landscape-painters were active before the genius of Rembrandt came to crown the glory of her achievement.

HENDRICK AVERCAMP
1585 – 1663

Avercamp, of Kampen by Zwolle, was chiefly enamoured of the winter. His paintings of frozen canals and rivers with figures in the snow and in the ice set a considerable fashion. The National Gallery has a typical work.

ESAIAS VAN DER VELDE
1590? – 1630

Esaias van der Velde, born at Amsterdam, 'tis said in 1597, which is probably too late, since he went to Haarlem in 1610, married in 1611, and was free of the Guild in 1612! painted landscapes with figures and horses with the bold touch which proves that he had looked upon the art of Hals. In 1630 he was at Leyden, and a member of the Guild at The Hague. It has been said of him that "from him came Van Goyen, who created Solomon Ruysdael, who begat Jacob Ruysdael, who fathered Hobbema." His Rotterdam *Skirmish* is of 1623; his Amsterdam *Surrender of Bois-le-Duc* is of 1629-30; his two Dresden *Skirmishes* are of 1636 and 1637.

But a far greater than these was arising in the land.

OF PAINTING

WHEREIN WE WALK ABROAD OVER THE LEVEL LANDS OF HOLLAND WITH THE EARLY POETS OF LAND-SCAPE WHEN THE SIXTEEN-HUNDREDS WERE YOUNG

HERCULES SEGHERS

1590 – 1640

Another landscape-painter for whose art Rembrandt had sincere admiration was the unfortunate Hercules Seghers. Hercules Seghers (or HERCULES PIETERSZ) knew penury all his years, and unfortunately most of his many etchings went to wrap the goods of his grocer and greengrocer, and have vanished. Berlin has his *Dutch Landscape* and the Uffizi his fine *Storm*, long given to Rembrandt. Seghers was painting at Amsterdam in 1607, the year after Rembrandt's birth, and disappears about 1630, having in despair given himself up to drink. He made many efforts to engrave in colours, calling down upon him the anger of his wife by using the scant supply of family linen. However, he fell down the stairs one fine day, when in his cups, and broke his neck.

There is the pathetic life-history of a man destined to influence one of the greatest schools of painting that the world has ever seen; it is the too oft-repeated life-history of Dutch genius. His rare etchings to-day are of large price; his paintings have been given to other masters. Born at Haarlem, he went to Amsterdam as a boy, and became 'prentice to Gilles van Coninxloo; the 'prentice's fees were never paid. By 1612 Seghers was free of his master, for he entered the Haarlem Guild in that, his twenty-second year, going back to Amsterdam soon after, where on the 27th day of the December of the same year he married Anneken van der Bruggen of Antwerp in her fortieth year. And in Amsterdam the pair lived until 1629; easy-going it would seem, since a natural daughter lived in the house and was cared for by both in generous

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fashion. In 1631 Seghers was at Utrecht; in 1633 at The Hague; thence he went back to Amsterdam, where he died, a drunken, broken man, in 1640. His was one long struggle with debt. His etchings have enabled modern research to give him back some of the landscapes long given to Rembrandt and Ruysdael and Van Goyen and others; and of these etchings Amsterdam has fifty of the sixty known by him. They show much of the Italian scenery and aim, but are pronouncedly Dutch for all that. He not only tinted his etchings with colour, but tried hard to print colour-etchings. He proved himself an earnest student of Nature.

Of his painted landscapes, Berlin has one of a flat country which, on being cleaned, revealed his name under a forged "J. N. Goyen"; Berlin also has a small twilight scene. The Uffizi has a fine large *Mountainous Landscape*, long given to Rembrandt, the masterpiece of Seghers—a superb achievement. Edinburgh has his *Desolate High Valley*, also given to Rembrandt.

His gaunt firs thickly hung, or rather bearded, with moss are very characteristic of him in the rocky parts of his landscapes.

Rembrandt's mighty tribute to Seghers is well known, and he possessed himself of a large number of landscapes by him. The kinship of the landscape art of the two men is so close that, as we have seen, much of Seghers' work has been given to Rembrandt. It was after Seghers came back to Amsterdam in the thirties that he had so profound an influence upon the art of Rembrandt. On the other hand, in his later landscapes Seghers caught the strong light and shade of Rembrandt. In Seghers the Dutch school of landscape, in spite of his Flemish training under Coninxloo, had its birth. To him the sky gave

its light, the atmosphere its airiness, the firmament its luminous magic, the earth yielded its poetry. We may go as far as Bode and acknowledge Seghers as the great discoverer, the founder of modern landscape. To him was revealed that a far vaster thing than beauty was the aim of art. He uttered the moods called up in the presence of Nature. The mighty forms of the mountains roused the sense of grandeur and power; ruins and dead trees brought forth desolation; the vast deeps of the leagues away and the vast heavens thrilled him with the sense of infinity; the twilight its hunger of longing.

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And he revealed these significances to Roghman, to Momper, to Everdingen, and above all to Rembrandt van Ryn. It was Seghers who came to Rembrandt when he was essaying landscape, baffled by the Italianised ideals, and led him to his mighty Dutch achievement.

The high poetic achievement of Seghers in landscape was too profound to create a school, though it had its effects in craftsmanship. There had arisen in Holland a whole group of young landscape-painters, who by the simple painting of their native land, whilst they did not baffle simple minds by high poetic gifts, appealed to the Dutchman's keen love of his land in the ordinary folk. And these young artists, wholly neglected by the great, whose eyes were on the Italian art, painted the homely scenes for the ordinary man. Of this group of painters one stands out prominently, raising it by his innate gifts and prodigious industry—his name Jan van Goyen.

VAN GOYEN

1596 – 1656

JAN VAN GOYEN was born at Leyden on the 13th of January 1596. As a 'prentice he constantly changed

his masters. It was the key to his life-character. Inventive, vivid of imagination, energetic, active, and of prodigious industry, he grew to be a restless, changeable man. By nineteen he went a-wandering to Haarlem and apprenticed himself to Esaias van de Velde ; back he came to Leyden again to marry at twenty-two. Prolific and facile a painter as he was, Van Goyen only reached to lightness and nimble dexterity of hand through intense and dogged study of Nature, and elaborate care.

Fortunately Van Goyen signed and dated his work, so that we can follow his advance from 1620. His art of these "twenties"—from his twenty-sixth to his thirty-fourth year—was of the scenic type in which at its foot the life of the day is played—fairs, markets, travellers, skaters, and the like, vigorously handled.

About his thirty-third year or so, Van Goyen was concerning himself with pure landscape. In 1631 Van Goyen got wandering again ; in 1634 he settled at The Hague, where he at once received the favour of the town and of the Court. His industry at The Hague was intense—he poured forth paintings and drawings by the hundred. The vogue for drawings in albums was very great. Unfortunately his restless nature was not content with artistic success. He steeped himself in picture-dealing ; and his passion for gambling and money-making soon sent him to the mad speculation in bulbs that had sent the Dutch crazy. He was soon speculating in land and houses and building. This buying and selling and letting of houses took up so much of his energy that it is a marvel that his art could have been so prolific. One of his houses he let to a youth called Paul Potter, who was to come to wide fame in art in the days close at hand. But his speculations turned out badly, though it did not damage his position whilst he

lived. Ter Borch has limned Van Goyen for us in a portrait that reveals the man at the Liechtenstein Gallery in Vienna.

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A prolific and facile painter, Van Goyen seems now to have taken deep interest in the sea and the waters of canals and rivers and the reflections therein; and he wrought these things in tender grey harmonies, not remarkable for atmosphere or light. But slowly the subtleties of atmosphere and light were revealed to him, and by his fortieth or forty-fifth year he was recording them, thereby adding poetic sense to his industrious artistry, and the work of his last years is marked by luminosity. But he never reached a full poetic utterance, nor wrought with the wizardry of genius.

The National Gallery *River Scene* is dated 1645; and the gallery holds also a fine *Winter Scene.*

Van Goyen's daughters were to inherit their father's reckless impulsiveness. The elder, Margrit, married the artist Jan Steen; and the younger surrendered herself to, and had to marry in haste, Jacques de Claeuw, the painter of still-life. Van Goyen died in 1656.

Another artist of his date so closely akin to Van Goyen that his works are often given to him, was Solomon van Ruysdael.

SOLOMON VAN RUYSDAEL
1600 – 1670

Solomon van Ruysdael of Haarlem, though but four years younger than Van Goyen, is reputed to have been his pupil; the evidences are lacking. Ruysdael was but twelve when Van Goyen was pupil to Esaias van de Velde at Haarlem. Now Ruysdael is never known to have left

Haarlem. Again, their early work is unlike; it is in the later work that they come nearer together. Solomon van Ruysdael entered the Haarlem Guild in 1623.

Solomon van Ruysdael was a man as opposite in temperament and habits to Van Goyen as could well be. Sedate, contented with his life and with his town, and being a man of considerable means and of good position, he knew none of the fret of debt that fell to the mercurial and reckless other. And, as a fact, they differed in their art. Van Goyen dared and went much farther, knew a wider gamut, and reached to a fuller and richer achievement; Solomon Ruysdael spent the forty years of his artistic career in creating a style based on a simpler form and on a narrower gamut. He loved the farmhouses, the wayside inns under great trees, with the loitering carts at the door, the cattle and the horsemen on the high road, the ferries and boats upon the rivers that run between wooded banks. But he, too, from yellowish schemes came to love of silvery greys.

ISACK VAN RUYSDAEL was brother to Solomon and father to the greatest of all this house, the famous Jacob van Ruisdael. Isack was a picture-dealer and painter, living at Haarlem in 1642, and dying there in 1677. JACOB VAN RUISDAEL or RUYSDAEL was to bring to Dutch landscape a solemn dignity and a high poetic power of which neither Van Goyen nor his own uncle Solomon van Ruysdael ever dreamed, and a rich colour-sense of which they were incapable.

ROELANDT ROGHMAN

1596? – 1686

Some ten years older than Rembrandt was the man for whom Rembrandt had so close an affection—Roelandt

Roghman, the landscape-painter. Roghman was a pure Dutchman in his vision and his craft; and many of his works, with forged signatures, pass for the achievement of Rembrandt. He was to know bitter neglect; as he put it in his own terse phrase, "he had gained knowledge and experience only to find that he had no use for them." He died in an almshouse in 1686, long after his friend had been laid in his grave. It is told of Roghman's pupil, JAN GRIFFIER, that he went to Rembrandt and asked to enter his studio, only to be roughly declined, as Rembrandt told him his affection for Roghman was too great to let him steal his pupils. Cassel has two large landscapes by Roghman with forged signatures of Rembrandt; and the Oldenburg *Hilly Landscape* by Roghman bears Rembrandt's forged name in full. He painted and etched many views about Amsterdam, and the picturesque scenery of Holland, and of the *Wood* by the Hague. Rembrandt had a great appreciation for Roghman's art.

We have seen, at Dordrecht, JACOB GERRITSZ CUYP creating fine landscape as well as good portraiture—to be the pattern to a greater Cuyp.

VAN DER NEER

1603 – 1677

AART or AERT VAN DER NEER, born at Gorkum in 1603, seems to have fashioned his art largely upon that of Camphuysen, who was born in 1598, and is best known for his winter, evening, and moonlight scenes which set the tune of Van der Neer's genius. Van der Neer to-day is come into a vogue far above his gifts, largely due to the enthusiasm of the "experts." But it is something of poetic justice, for he wrought his art in penury and neglect, and he lies in a pauper's grave.

Van der Neer began life as a steward to the Von Arkels, and seems to have essayed painting, thrust to it by the poetic instinct that would not be stayed.

Though he monogrammed nearly every work, he rarely added a date. Amsterdam has a *Landscape* of 1639. But to be poet and manage other people's estates were no light affair.

Van der Neer at last burnt his boats behind him, and went to Amsterdam in 1640 to give his career to art; and the lateness of life at which he began to paint his earliest-known pictures, he being thirty-five, is easily accounted for. What repute he won was due to "his carefully wrought landscapes, particularly by moonlight"; but he won to scant repute even with these, and his life was one long struggle against the most dire want, and, what must have galled him more, the neglect of his age. His poetic works he had to sell for sorry sums which scarce kept him in bread; and disaster unutterable threatening him—for even a poet must live—he had at last to become a tavern-lord in Amsterdam, with his painter-son, Jan van der Neer, as his assistant. We could have spared Jan as potman; but it is pathetic to think of the loss to art that the tavern took in Aart van der Neer.

His art now leaped forward to higher achievement. The Wantage *Winter* is of 1643, the Brussels *Moonlight* of 1644 in the Arenberg Gallery. These fine pieces were the key-note of hundreds of his works. The great *Moonlight* in the Beit Collection in London is of 1646. The Prague *Men playing Bowls* is of 1649, of about the time of the Hermitage sunset called the *Mill by the Water*. He painted his figures in the landscape with great distinction. The two National Gallery *Evenings* hold the poetry of this fine period of his art.

As the fifties ran out, his powers increased, and in spite of dire poverty he created some of his best work. Perhaps the tavern, of which he was landlord in 1659, freed him from the fret of his creditors awhile; but he now painted those smaller landscapes of evening, of the night, and of winter, which may be seen at the Wallace, in the Kann Collection, at Berlin, and elsewhere, in which he reaches to mastery. He later fell away to those imaginary moonlight scenes from memory by which he has too long been judged.

WHEREIN WE WALK ABROAD OVER THE LEVEL LANDS OF HOLLAND WITH THE EARLY POETS OF LANDSCAPE WHEN THE SIXTEEN-HUNDREDS WERE YOUNG

Van der Neer was fifty when there came from Haarlem to live in Amsterdam the brooding poet of Dutch landscape whom the world knows as Ruisdael.

Harassed by creditors, Van der Neer died in the most sordid penury at Amsterdam on the 9th of November 1677.

A poet, he was one of the best draughtsmen of the Dutch landscape school. But he had a wretched sense of selection, and scattered his picture in a ragged, spotty series of patches that largely wrecked the grandeur with which Nature inspired him. The National Gallery has an *Evening* landscape with figures and cattle that is compact of poetry, and the great trees are there composed and painted with a rhythmic exquisiteness and truth that raise Van der Neer to high achievement. It is a finely wrought arrangement, and being infused with pure poetic mood, it astounds one that such a master could have been passed by. But even here he is not without hint of that broken and patchy design that was his curse, and which is still more pronounced in the fine *River by Moonlight*; a flaw which breaks the impression of the eye and, by consequence, breaks the mood.

The witchery of the rising and the setting sun and of the moon's light, the gloom of the dark silhouettes of

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mills and trees and things that stand darkling against the light of departing day, all fascinated Van der Neer. He caught the varying moods that are in the greys, from black to white, in wintry scapes, and with what skill he wrought these things you may see at the Wallace. And if his eyes did not discover the music that is in splendid colour, he at least had a subtle and keen sense of the tones of Nature, even if he wrought them somewhat heavily and not without monotony. But, after all, this deeper sense of the music that is in colour is a modern revelation, and to the older men was scarce revealed. Indeed, so modern it is, that the professors scarce even suspect it—for no bookish scholarship shall help to its sensing, nor antique coffers, nor dusty tomes, nor parchment archives deliver the wonder of it.

CHAPTER VI

WHEREIN SHALLOW RESPECTABILITY BROWBEATS A GIANT — NOT WITHOUT WIDE APPROVAL; AND THE LITTLE PEDANTS ARE CROWNED WITH THE BAYS

WHEREIN SHALLOW RESPECTABILITY BROWBEATS A GIANT— NOT WITHOUT WIDE APPROVAL; AND THE LITTLE PEDANTS ARE CROWNED WITH THE BAYS

Thus by the time that the years of the sixteen-hundreds were set in their course, the New Learning had created a new Reality. The new Humanism, baulked in Italy and the South, came to the North and brought vast revelation to two small peoples. These small peoples flung off sacerdotalism and the aristocratism that bound the South beyond bursting of the bonds. Both peoples flung off the old order, and democracy was born. Both peoples became free; they turned their eyes from the old orthodoxy and founded their faith in humanity—by consequence their tense interest was centred in the human. To one people the Renaissance came at last, not as a sham, but as a reality —to that people was given the seed that has grown into the mightiest empire the world has ever seen—and England burst into song through the voice of Shakespeare and the great Elizabethans. To the other small people in Holland was given the thrill of a mighty enterprise, and Holland spoke her splendour in the utterance of colour.

That was a wondrous century that 1600 brought into being. In Spain wrought Velazquez; but the Spaniards were tied hand and foot by her ancient state, and her eyes were clouded by her ancient vision. A few splendid years;

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then, Velazquez dead, she reeled back into impotence. In Flanders wrought the virile genius of Rubens. But Flanders kept her ancient sacerdotalism and bowed to her ancient aristocracies. 'Twas in Holland that the new vision led the people to free themselves with the sword, and made them ready to die rather than lose that freedom. It was in Holland that the new revelation was grasped; and Democracy arose in the land.

Yet the new revelation was born amidst greynesses and narrownesses enough. But the people held to the reality, even if they wantonly destroyed much that was precious in their blind fury to be rid of the shams. They turned inquisitive eyes upon life, and they glorified the homes of the people. Into Holland came Frans Hals, ridding the art of all hollowness and pretence and sham. And scarce was he come into possession of his great genius when there was born into the land an artist who was to be the peer of Hals and Velazquez and Rubens as painter; but who was as *artist*, as lord of a vaster realm than any of these others trod, the supreme poet of them all, employing a wider gamut of orchestration, ringing from the rigid factors of colour upon a flat surface a deep and resonant utterance that transcends the power of merely great painting and reaches into a sublime realm of art whereby the senses are thrilled and the emotions aroused to majestic feeling, deep stirring as though colour and light and shade took life and moved us into experience. And the immortal name of this man was Rembrandt.

Leyden had stood with triumphant success the two sieges of 1573 and 1574 by the Spaniard; and to the offer of William of Orange to grant the city freedom from taxation, her citizens asked instead for a university. To that university came some of the greatest scholars of the

age. And by her largeness of tolerance, the city was soon an example to the world; from her streets fled superstition and narrow prejudice; the laws against sorcerers were abolished; the persecution of the Jews ceased. Her printing-presses became the wonder of the years, pouring forth the prized Elzevirs. In Leyden was born, and to her university went, her greatest son, Rembrandt van Ryn. He who, reckless of public favour, was to be the mighty achiever of the great age of the Tenebrosi, as Michelangelo had been the compelling and majestic poet of the Renaissance in Florence, and Titian and Veronese and Tintoretto the supreme painters of Venice.

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Born twenty-six years after Frans Hals, dying but three years after him, Rembrandt wrought his mighty art in the years of Frans Hals, of Rubens, of Ribera, of Zurbarán, and of Velazquez. They were the years that saw Holland plant deep beyond uprooting the tree of democracy that was to grow to such wide splendour. The Tudors had already planted that tree in merry fashion enough in England overchannel. The Dutchmen, who stood with drawn sword, and set lip, to guard its growth, brought to the business a sour fanaticism, 'tis true; but in these steeple-hatted folk, who met the old fanaticism with as stern fanaticism, was a wondrous vision, for their eyes were set on the brotherhood of man, the government of the people by the people for the people. Their battle-cries that are now our everyday sayings and the breath of our bodies wheresoever master-peoples forgather, they in their strenuous day could only dare to utter sword in hand. They won to victory; and in the doing they led the ages to come. In these days of the sixteen-hundreds the Stuarts were bent on overthrowing the new revelation in England; and thereby turned Merry England to sour ways awhile. But before Rembrandt and

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Hals lay down to die, Cromwell, with mighty sword and forthright will, trampled in heavy boots over the tyrannies, and made the land free; and, in the doing, planted the American colonies with the new faith in man—those colonies that were to teach the whole world a mighty lesson of the Freedom of Man a hundred years thereafter, and to bring to France her supreme splendour. But the root of it all was in these Dutchmen; they fought and bled for Liberty and Democracy—and of them that gave utterance to the spirit of the people and the age, the greatest were Rembrandt and Hals and Ver Meer.

But to the astounding artistry and vision for the reality of life that had been granted to Hals and Velazquez, to Ver Meer and Zurbarán, was added by his fairy godmother to Rembrandt a wizard gift of imagination which had been withheld from the others.

REMBRANDT

1606 – 1669

Frans Hals was twenty-six, Rubens twenty-eight, Velazquez and Van Dyck but children of seven, when there was born to a worthy miller of Leyden, one Harmen Gerritszoon van Ryn, and to his wife the baker's daughter, Neeltje (Cornelia) Willemsdochter, on the fifteenth day of the July of 1606, his fifth child, a son whom the world was to know as REMBRANDT. Why the child was given the unusual name of Rembrandt is not clear, for Rembrandt Harmensz (being Harmenszoon, a son of Harmen), was called for surname VAN RYN, and the Rembrandt Harmensz van Ryn soon becomes shortened to REMBRANDT VAN RYN, "Rembrandt of the Rhine," he having been born at Leyden; and the name thence early slipped into the immortal

simplicity of Rembrandt—as all great men ever slip into simplicity of one-namedness, without title or ornament.

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The father, Harmen Gerritsz (Gerritszoon, the son of Gerard) Roelefszoon (the son of Roelef), would appear to have been not only well-to-do, but to have grown ambitious for his boy Rembrandt—or, perhaps it was the lad's mother, whose kindly face was to be immortalised by the son in masterpieces — but the father, instead of 'prenticing Rembrandt to his own trade as he had done with the three elder brothers, sent him to study the law at the ripe age of fourteen in Leyden University.

But this "son of a miller, but made of other flour than his father," was not made of the stuff for the law; and after studying at the University, or impatiently suffering such education, for he did not take to books, broke his father's ambition of respectability by clamouring for the paint-pots of an artist's calling. So, a year after he went to the University, he left it, at fifteen, to enter the studio of the mediocre painter, JACOB VAN SWANENBUERGH (1580-1638), and learnt the mysteries thereat for three years of 'prenticeship; whence in 1624, at eighteen, he went awhile, 'tis said but a few months, to PIETER LASTMAN at Amsterdam, whose Italianisms are said to have roused the rebel spirit of the young fellow, destined to reach the topmost summits of his art. We have seen this same Lastman, pupil to Geerit Pietersz, go to Rome in 1604, and fall under the glamour of Adam Elsheimer, to come to fame on his return. A fair draughtsman, he employed rich warm colour in the Italian manner. He made his landscape backgrounds very important to his figures. Lastman had a fondness for painting Oriental Jewish dresses, and therefore may not be dismissed too lightly from the finding of Rembrandt's genius. But we see Rembrandt rejecting the

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Italian Renaissance as an alien thing, the rather inspired by the art and aim of the Tenebrosi—the men who repudiated the Renaissance, and whose battle-cry was "Back to Nature!" the essential aim of the Dutch and Spanish genius. It is said that Lastman taught the young fellow to etch; but it was to the works of Lucas van Leyden, which Rembrandt all through his life greatly treasured, that therein his heaviest debt was due. Rembrandt always kept a sincere affection for the man; but after six months with him he returned home to study painting in his own fashion.

Young Rembrandt returned to Leyden and gave himself up to the study of Nature and the development of a personal style. Affectionate, generous, simple of life, the young fellow was never very sociable; he lived largely observant of men and things, somewhat aloof and apart. He loved to go into the country and paint. His chief friend was the youthful LIEVENS, who had also been to Lastman; and there soon joined the two young fellows a younger man, the son of a glazier of the town, who was to come to fame as Gerard Dou. The lad Dou went to Rembrandt's studio in the February of 1628, and remained as pupil about three years—until 1631.

The engraver Van Vliet also went to Rembrandt. And the eager, industrious youths worked hard and happily together. The incompetent engraver Van Vliet at least has preserved for us the subjects of several of Rembrandt's lost paintings, such as *Lot's Daughters*, the *Baptism of the Eunuch*, and *St. Jerome at Prayer*.

Rembrandt soon found that he painted ill without a model, and early began to collect Oriental dresses, and curiosities, and "properties" to this end, wherewith to bedeck his sitters. From these he occasionally painted

still-life studies in the form of pictures then greatly in vogue amongst scholarly men, as a *Vanitas*.

But there was another influence, of which we hear little, for it has no evidence of records and documents—Rembrandt must have seen the work of Frans Hals. His art proves it again and again. Luckily he did not see too much of it, or of the work of any other mighty genius. Indeed, in giving Rembrandt a good teacher, if no great painter, as his initiator into the mysteries, the Fates were kind to the gifted lad; it was well that he should come to his art untrammelled by the thinking of other powerful wills. Living a simple life, the eager youth gave his day to the moulding of his mighty genius—his meal of a herring or a piece of cheese and bread was feast enough for one so rich in imagination.

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Early Phase

The young Rembrandt's first signed pictures are dated 1627—the Stuttgart *St. Paul in Prison* and the Berlin *Money-changer*, smoothly painted, but for all their youngness vaguely hinting at the pensive art of his great achievement. Of the year 1628 are his two small Scriptural subjects, the *Betrayal of Samson by Delilah* and the *Peter amongst the Servants of the High Priest.* To the monogram of R.H. he now adds L., and R.H.L. he used whilst he remained at Leyden. In the *Money-changer* and the *Peter* Rembrandt is early seen employing strong contrasts of light and shade. But he was soon painting in the manner that he was to make his own, developing that resonant, deep use of black and white that yielded him such astounding power; for at Cassel is a *Head of Himself*, and in the Pacully Collection at Paris is another *Head of Rembrandt* at twenty-one (1627) with a steel gorget at his throat, both wonderfully painted,

and hauntingly lighted. Rembrandt at twenty-one has found himself, and created a new artistry—given utterance to a new vision. Indeed, a number of youthful portraits may be seen at Cassel, Gotha, The Hague, and other places, which show Rembrandt using himself as model from the first. The astoundingly original Cassel portrait, called *Rembrandt with Disordered Hair*, is a marvel of deep vision. And always, paintings and etchings of this time reveal him studying expression. He found in his family and himself fine subjects for his brush and etching-needle; and his first dated etching is of his *Mother*, the head and shoulders over which Hamerton poured such fatuous praise, drawn in 1628. The pedants are wont to speak of Rembrandt's many etchings of "the peculiar beauty of his aged mother." It needs book-read culture to see it. Had Rembrandt sought beauty in the fine old face he had been a poor artist, but he was concerned with portraying his mother, and he did it with precocious genius, one of the most famous being the seated half-length known as *Rembrandt's Mother with the Black Veil.* In fact, from youth, Rembrandt had realised that art was the emotional utterance of the impressions of life, and the young fellow makes etching after etching of himself in which his sole intention is to render varying emotions—terror, laughter, pain, sadness, anger, and the like. His power in painting, as in *The Laughing Man in a Steel Gorget* (1628-9) at The Hague, is amazing in its mastery for a man at twenty-two, as is the superb Fabbri *Old Man with Bristly Beard* (1629). The etching-needle was now employed with exquisite skill to state the dignity of old age in his *Mother*, the pathos of the old hands that had guarded his childhood, the dreamy eyes of old womanhood. With what nervous and consummate sensitiveness his hand and vision were endowed may be seen in the young

Rembrandt's etchings at twenty-four, the year of 1630, when he wrought the profile of his father in the famous *Man with a Bald Head*; yet with what leaps and bounds he advanced to the fine etched portrait of his father in the famous *Man with the Fur Cap*, and the vigorous and masterly painting of *Rembrandt's Father* at Cassel, painted just before that father's death, whom he had also painted as a warrior with great upright plume in hat—in the Chamberlain *Portrait* at Brighton. The etching of Rembrandt's mother in the black veil shows her a widow, Rembrandt having lost his father in the April of 1630. Amsterdam has a painting of *Rembrandt's Mother* of about 1627-28; Windsor and Wilton House possess others of about 1629-30. Oldenburg has the dated portrait of 1631, known as *Anna the Prophetess*, in a Jewish dress. Windsor has a *Portrait* (of Gerard Dou) by Rembrandt, painted in 1631. Rembrandt at this time also etched and painted much an *Old Man with a Beard*, of whom the well-known etching of 1631 is so superb an example.

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The Cassel *Self-Portrait* of Rembrandt with his face in shadow had shown the youth rugged and heavy like a peasant; the Hague *Portrait* of 1629-30 gives us a more refined type at twenty-three. In fact, the young fellow was developing as man and artist at an astonishing pace. The "beardless youth" was clearly in considerable vogue amongst the collectors already. The *Judas returning the Price of Betrayal* is of this time. He was pouring forth etchings of beggars and vagabonds, and he rid them of the affectation of the ideal and set them down in all their squalor and misery. For Rembrandt was no academic palsy of Beauty. He went to Life and stood foot to foot with Life, and painted Life without fear, without gloss, and without lying. And therefore the genteel apologise for him; and the

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pedants, shaken in their beauty theory, try to explain him away.

He advances in power. His etchings of *The Presentation in the Temple*, the *Little Circumcision*, and the *Child Christ amongst the Doctors* are of 1630, and display mastery and originality of grouping, lighting, and handling; and his handling of paint becomes firmer and freer, though he still freely uses the butt-end of his brush to scrape the lights out of the mass of painting of the hair of the *Old Gentleman with White Beard* at Cassel. When Rembrandt signs his name in full he is delightfully uncertain of its spelling. The next year of 1631 sees him fully employed. The Stockholm painting of *St. Anastasius* gives us the old man with the white beard who was so much painted by him in his Leyden days. The Hague has his highly finished *Presentation in the Temple* of this year, in which the typical Rembrandt resonances of light and shade yield already their deep, orchestral power of utterance. This fine work has been marred by having its top rounded, losing thereby some little of the wondrous lift and dignity created by its perpendicularity. To Rembrandt's grasp of all the resources of his art hitherto known to his forerunners, is here added his own originality and genius. The emotions of dignity and reverence in this work have never been surpassed. Here and in the Munich *Holy Family* all the old attitude is gone; Rembrandt is concerned solely with the human appeal of the Bible stories. The artist is no longer tied to church conventions—the churches are now empty of pictures—he paints for the home.

Leyden was a city of theologians and scholars little concerned with art. Amsterdam called Rembrandt. His chief patrons were at Amsterdam. He was constantly having to journey thither. His family was well-to-do.

OF PAINTING

His only tie was his mother; and she was in good hands with his sister Lisbeth. Towards the end of 1631 the little circle of Leyden artists broke up. Lievens went to three years of great success at the English Court; Gerard Dou to his vogue, and Rembrandt, being in his twenty-fifth year, left Leyden for Amsterdam, whereat he settled for life; which city, as has been said in splendid phrase, he was to "make famous." Here the young fellow at once came to the front as a portrait-painter. Moreelse had set a stilted Italianised fashion in portraiture which was being practised by De Keyser; and the vogue compelled the young Rembrandt for awhile to accept it to a considerable degree in spite of his distaste for it; but he was soon to set it wholly aside. He went to Amsterdam, utterly contemptuous of the Italian ideals, a brooding man who had discovered life for himself, his whole vision centred upon the haunting values and deep resonances of light and shade. These yielded to him with astounding power the character of things—they yielded him the spiritual intensity of moods—and he went to Amsterdam wholly bent on compelling his hand's skill to create in masterpieces that which his vision revealed to him of life. He was content with so little, content with his own hearth, content to fill his home with things that helped him to create his art; his resolute will led him to his goal, and he never turned aside from his pathway to that goal.

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Rembrandt arrived at Amsterdam at twenty-five a complete master of his art. He was to develop it in the years to come. The works of his hand within two or three years of his arrival are amongst the masterpieces of the ages; indeed, he had already painted works that reveal an advance on all previous art.

Rembrandt came to a great city to which he was no

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stranger, and to take up his abode in a house that knew the young fellow well. He lodged with his friend Hendrick van Uylenborch, an art-dealer to whom he had been indebted for commissions, to whom he had lent some of his savings, and who probably was chiefly instrumental in inducing him to go to the great, broad-minded, tolerant community of Amsterdam, where religions were above petty persecution, and the very Jews were free citizens, bringing their genius, as they always do, to the increase of the city's splendour. The friendship of Rembrandt and Uylenborch was to have a prodigious influence on the art and life of the young painter from Leyden. Hendrick van Uylenborch was the scion of that noble Dutch family into which Rembrandt was soon to marry, making Saskia van Uylenborch immortal in many a masterpiece of portraiture. From his lodging with his friend, Rembrandt looked about for a workshop and a home, and found it on the canal called the Bloemgracht in the west of the town—a roomy warehouse that was to come to fame as Rembrandt's studio.

Here came to him that heavy woman who, stepping out of the garters that leave their mark upon her legs, sat to him for the clumsy nude who bathes as *Diana* and otherwise poses in Rembrandt's quaint mythologies. Here he brought his elaborately embroidered mantles and other "properties," with chains of gold and jewels and precious stones. The coarse country wench sat for him as *Potiphar's Wife*, the *Danaë*, and other characters, or just as the *Naked Woman on a Hillock*; and, whilst she easily accounts for Joseph's virtue, she at the same time reveals Rembrandt's whole concern in realism.

The *Good Samaritan* always appealed to Rembrandt; it stood for the genius of Amsterdam; and he both etched and painted the subject in the year of his arrival. Inde-

pendent in character as Rembrandt was, he soon found that elaborate finish was the vogue, and he had to live. Berlin possesess the two little *Woman with Fair Hair* and the *Rape of Proserpine* of this time, finished, as was the vanished De Morny *Rape of Europa.*

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The following year of 1632 sees old men enter into his studio, whom he now often paints. Cassel has two portraits of old men, one of which is a model he employs in the Stockholm *Saint Peter* and other pictures; the Metz *Head of an Old Man* is of a year later (1633). But it was portraiture that had called him to Amsterdam. Here he now saw the works of Nicolaes Elias, Holbein, Rubens, Van Dyck and others. Of the painters then in fashion was De Keyser, in his middle thirties and in wide vogue. To win sitters Rembrandt had now to set aside his freedom awhile, and rival De Keyser. With dogged will he held his supreme genius back, and set to work to beat De Keyser and the rest on their own ground.

Hamburg possesses the *Maurice Huygens* of 1632; Cassel the so-called *Coppenol* sharpening a pen, the famous writing-master whom Rembrandt was to paint in the masterpiece at the Hermitage; the Halford *Marten Looten* (with the exception of the Louvre *Philosophers* of 1633, the signature R. H. L. van Rijn was still used); the Vienna *Young Woman*, seated, dressed in black; the *Captain Joris de Caulery* "with a gun in his hand"; the pair of oval De Sagan portraits of man and wife, now gone to America; the pair of Beeresteyn portraits of man and wife, now in the New York Museum; and the Belvedere pair of portraits of man and wife, were all of this year. Setting himself to his task with unceasing labour, making elaborate studies and sketches and etchings, he forced his powers forward so that his fame rapidly spread abroad.

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We have seen the fashion for "Corporation pictures" (or civic groups) in Holland. If there were one country that owed everything to brotherhood and unity it was Holland; the Dutch overcame their enemies, won the land on which they stood from the sea, won their mighty position in the world by unity; and the civic group is the emblem of their splendour. In this year of 1632 Rembrandt was called to the painting of his famous group called *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Tulp.* We have seen Aert Pietersen paint the subject in 1603, followed by Mierevelt in 1617, then by De Keyser in 1619 (his first-known work), then by Nicolaes Elias in 1626 in the badly burnt picture at Amsterdam. In 1632 Dr. Tulp asked Rembrandt to paint the subject for presentation to the Surgeons' Guild. This work, which is fatuously over-lauded by critics in face of the achievement of Rembrandt in the near future in such masterpieces as the Hermitage *Polish Nobleman* and the National Gallery *Old Woman,* Rembrandt was soon to leave far behind him. As yet his mighty powers have but revealed themselves in wondrous hints. Upon this *Anatomy Lesson* of 1632 the painter signs his full name, Rembrant Sc. 1632, discarding his mono-gram. But whilst the *Anatomy Lesson* was not his mightiest achievement in art, it caught the town; its success was great; he stepped into the foremost rank, and commissions poured in upon him. Of this time are the two large portraits at the Wallace, *Burgomaster Pellicorne and his little Son,* and his wife *Susanna van Collen and Daughter,* signed Rembrant. In the Dulwich *Portrait of Rembrandt* and the Petworth *Portrait of Rembrandt* we see the man as he was in 1632, the year in which he painted also the profile portrait of a fair-haired young woman, who was to become his wife a couple of years thereafter—the Haro

Saskia van Uylenborch, kinswoman of Rembrandt's friend with whom he lodged when he came to Amsterdam.

So Saskia came to visit the artist with her cousin, and Rembrandt painted her thrice again in this same year—in the profile portrait at Stockholm, in the full-face in the Liechtenstein Gallery (if it be not Rembrandt's sister), on both of which he has set his gold-embroidered cloak about her shoulders; and as the famous so-called *Jewish Bride* at the Liechtenstein (if she also be not Rembrandt's sister), in which the seated Saskia, arrayed in rich stuffs, is being attired by an attendant woman.

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To this year of 1632 belongs Rembrandt's large and majestic etching of *The Raising of Lazarus*, the *Ratkiller*, the *Persian*, and the *St. Jerome Praying*.

Thenceforth Rembrandt, whilst keeping to the vogue, broadens out his style somewhat. Several pairs of portraits were painted at the end of 1632 and beginning of 1633: the man in 1632, his wife in 1633. Of these are the oval pair of the Wynn Ellis *Man in the broad-brimmed Hat* (signed Rembrant 1632) and his wife *Cornelia Pronck* (signed Rembrandt 1633), now gone to another collection, having been rejected by the National Gallery in 1876! The flesh in these is painted in the "cool green" style of Rembrandt's early or "De Keyser manner." Brunswick possesses the oval pair of the so-called *Grotius* (1632) and his *Wife* (1633); the critics, by the way, are scarcely justified in separating these couples by a year; they were probably painted within the same quarter, late in 1632, and maybe in January 1633. The term year is but an arbitrary one. Dresden has the *Willem Burchgraeff of Rotterdam* (1633), and Frankfort his wife, *Margaretha van Bilderbeecq*. Cassel has the *Jan-Hermansz Krul* (1633). Indeed, this year was a busy one for Rembrandt. The Wallace Collec-

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tion, the Rothschilds and Prince Youssoupoff possess several small portraits of children painted in 1633; the small Hope full-length portrait of a *Man and his Wife* in a room; the Stockholm *Portrait of a Theologian* and the fine Pourtalès's *Young Patrician*, in which Rembrandt allows his brush free play and advances towards his own conception of the hauntingness and resonance of chiaroscuro. Perhaps his most famous work of this year is the Buckingham Palace *Shipbuilder and his Wife*, in which the elderly Jan Vij sits at a table whilst his wife hands him a letter; a work wherein Rembrandt proves himself a dramatist with rare grip on character, and the capacity to utter the happiness of the comradeship of an aging couple who have lived their lives in harmony. Rembrandt is a great artist, master of the human emotions. He was now besieged by sitters. Fashion waited its turn patiently at his studio door.

In 1633 he painted *St. Peter's Boat* and, it may be, the Frankfort *David playing the Harp before Saul*, if it be not earlier, that he was to paint again in later years. The Louvre has two paintings of *A Philosopher absorbed in Meditation*, and a study in red chalk for a *Philosopher*. How the gloom is made to give forth, as with deep musical utterance, the haunting sense of meditation! Rembrandt's followers, Ostade and De Hooch and the rest, were to be inspired by him to wondrous sense of the fascination of interiors; but how far short the greatest of them fall of the spiritual emotion that the genius of Rembrandt wrought with the wizardry of his art! He had already painted the André *Christ with his Disciples at Emmaus* with fine use of chiaroscuro; but he now masters all its eloquences.

In 1633 there were in Rembrandt's studio two pictures, the *Elevation of the Cross* and the *Descent from the Cross*.

His fame was wide. The Stadholder, William the Silent's son, Frederick Henry of Orange, who governed Holland during her greatest years of fortune and prosperity, was turning his eyes towards art—his secretary, Constantine Huygens, probably directing those eyes; and Huygens had already, in Rembrandt's youth at Leyden, prophesied a great career for the young painter. Huygens now entered into treaty with Rembrandt upon the Prince's behalf for the purchase of the two paintings. It is interesting that Rembrandt begs that his work may be hung in a strong light. Munich possesses the pictures in a bad state to-day. Rembrandt etched the *Descent from the Cross* in this year of 1633. The Hermitage holds a larger replica painted by Rembrandt the following year. It is characteristic of his generous mind that he repeatedly sends a message to the Prince, that if his price be held too high, he will leave it to his decision.

WHEREIN SHALLOW RESPECTABILITY BROWBEATS A GIANT—NOT WITHOUT WIDE APPROVAL; AND THE LITTLE PEDANTS ARE CROWNED WITH THE BAYS

It were best perhaps here to touch upon other religious pictures painted by Rembrandt for the Prince, though they belong to the later thirties of the century. In 1636 he painted the *Ascension*; it was the January of 1639 before he finished the *Entombment* and the *Resurrection*, both "more than half done" in 1636; and Rembrandt presented Huygens with a large canvas, much against that artistic good fellow's conscience, out of his indebtedness to the secretary. All this series of the Passion had been begun in 1633; and Rembrandt, though he had developed beyond them, tried to keep them in the same key—in spirit and intention, therefore they are all of 1633. But it is worth noting that he lays stress in his letter on his having tried to make the last two "the most vigorous and natural of the series," and that he again appeals for a strong light upon his work. Of the several copies of the *Entombment*

made by his pupils, Rembrandt worked upon one now at at Dresden, and even signed and dated it in 1653.

To 1633 belong his etchings of *The Good Samaritan* and the *Flight into Egypt*; and to the same year some of those many studies of painted heads to which fancy names are given, the so-called *St. Paul* at the Belvedere in Vienna, and the *Old Man* at Munich. These fancy heads had a great vogue; and Rembrandt's pupils turned them out by the hundred. They are to be found broad-cast over Europe, in houses and galleries.

The year 1634 saw him besieged by sitters. His art moves forward by leaps and bounds. The Hermitage has a young patrician, the *Man in the Broad-brimmed Hat* (1634); Bridgewater House has two oval busts of aristocratic ladies, a *Young Woman*, dated 1634, and the *Fair Young Woman* in a black dress, perhaps of a year or two later; the Rothschild *Marten Daey* (signed and dated 1634), and his wife, *Machteld van Daey*; all of which prove Rembrandt's power of stating the subtle thing called breeding, and the beauty of women. Of this year were the *Hans Alenson* and his *Wife*; and the National Gallery possesses the world-famed and immortal oval portrait of *An Old Woman*, in which Rembrandt triumphantly signs and dates the fact that he has come into his kingdom. Never were the pathos and the serene dignity of old age rendered with greater power than in this compelling and wonderful painting by a man of twenty-eight. The painted surface yields forth the very thought of the living being. Lighted with consumnate art, painted as by magic, the nation possesses in this picture one of the supreme masterpieces ever wrought by the hand of man. The character, the soul, the very breath of the living body move and have reality. The dreaming, inward-gazing eyes of eighty years, that have known sorrow and left the

benign old soul unsoured—the spiritual intensity of it all is given forth by an art that is solemnly resonant as some anthem in a cathedral. Rembrandt steps into his mighty realm.

WHEREIN SHALLOW RESPECTABILITY BROWBEATS A GIANT—NOT WITHOUT WIDE APPROVAL; AND THE LITTLE PEDANTS ARE CROWNED WITH THE BAYS

To 1634 belongs the little Hermitage *Incredulity of St. Thomas* (now at Berlin); the Wallace has a negro's head, the *Black Archer*, painted in this wonderful year—the wonderful year which was to be so happy a one for Rembrandt, for, on the 22nd of June 1634 he married Saskia van Uylenborch. Rembrandt the man, in this his twenty-eighth year, his own genius has recorded for us in masterpieces of portraiture. If we would see Rembrandt's art at its full powers in any phase of his career, we may go to his portraits of himself, wherein he gives range to his vision, unhampered by consideration of the prejudices and pretty feelings of his fashionable sitters. It is in the Louvre *Portrait of Himself*, hatless, in rich cloak and with gold chain about his shoulders, that we find him creating his masterpiece of 1633, the year before his marriage—a living thing, such as Rembrandt's genius created to prove him in the foremost rank. Of about the same time is the equally famous Hague *Portrait of Himself* (1633-34), in the plumed hat, steel gorget and cloak, known as *Rembrandt as an Officer*. The second portrait in the Louvre, in which he wears a cap, is of 1634, the year of his marriage. And Berlin has a full-face portrait of *Rembrandt*, a scarf round his neck and the upper part of the face shadowed by the cap, the whole a powerful piece of chiaroscuro, which reveals the man to us as he went to his marriage. Cassel has the full-face *Rembrandt in a Casque*, or small helmet, dated 1634. The Wallace has two bust portraits of about this time. The Pitti Palace has a *Rembrandt* in large cap, a cloak over his steel gorget and with a gold chain.

Rembrandt had painted Saskia in the Haro oval profile bust of 1632. He was soon to paint her again and again as his wife. Saskia had lost her mother in 1619; her father, lawyer and magistrate, coming of the patrician family of Van Uylenborch, much employed in diplomacies, was at Delft in 1584, a guest at the table of William of Orange, the Silent, when that great Prince was foully murdered. The diplomat died in 1624, five years after his wife, leaving Saskia at twelve an orphan, her two eldest brothers lawyers, her third brother a soldier, and all her five sisters married, one to De Geest the artist. Saskia's cousin, Hendrick van Uylenborch had settled in Amsterdam, where, after flinging up the career of painting he had taken to dealing in works of art—thereby becoming the friend of Rembrandt, and his host and encourager. So, as we have seen, his cousin Saskia had come into Rembrandt's studio and life, and so also came to sit to him. Her kinsfolk were friends of the painter. Rembrandt had lived alone in Amsterdam; he had not mixed with his fellow-artists, and their taverns did not call to him; he clung to his work and his studio. An affectionate man, he began to long for a home of his own; and Saskia came and grew into the genial love of the young fellow. He won the well-born girl. Rembrandt was now the most courted artist in Amsterdam; his prospects were of the brightest. Wealth and fashion came to his studio. So he could ask a girl of independent fortune to marry him.

Rembrandt painted her in 1633, the year before his marriage, in the oval Hirsch full-face of *Saskia*, much like the Liechtenstein full-face. Dresden has the famous smiling *Saskia in a Hat*, which throws a heavy shadow across the upper half of the smiling face, painted and dated 1633.

The Cassel half-length *Saskia* in profile, wearing a hat,

VII

REMBRANDT

1606 – 1669

DUTCH SCHOOL OF AMSTERDAM

"REMBRANDT AS A YOUNG MAN IN CAP AND STEEL GORGET"

(PITTI PALACE AT FLORENCE)

and holding a sprig of rosemary—the Dutch sign of betrothal—to her bosom, is probably of 1634. And again, in the spring of the year of their marriage, he painted her as *Flora*, or a shepherdess, bedecked with flowers, in the canvas now at the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, and known for some indescribable reason as "The Jewish Bride." There seems to be a mania for calling Rembrandt's paintings of women—Jewish Brides. Rembrandt repeated this conceit of spring in the full-faced *Flora*, once belonging to Sir Joshua Reynolds, in the Lechmere collection.

WHEREIN SHALLOW RESPECTABILITY BROWBEATS A GIANT—NOT WITHOUT WIDE APPROVAL; AND THE LITTLE PEDANTS ARE CROWNED WITH THE BAYS

On the 22nd of the June of 1634, Rembrandt and Saskia van Uylenborch became man and wife, entering into that happiness which was so whole-hearted for both of them. But, strangely enough, Rembrandt signs himself as twenty-six in the elaborate marriage deeds. For his genius as well as for his happiness, his marriage with Saskia van Uylenborch, the daughter of a wealthy advocate, in this June of 1634, Rembrandt being twenty-eight, was of vital significance—it freed his hand to work out his brain's skill and the vision of his poetic eyes, and to give utterance to his glowing imagination, thus leading to the real beginning of his great career. He was thenceforth the vogue. This happy marriage, that brought out all the artistic power of the man, and filled his life with a lofty love, was to be fruitful in great works—his admiration for Saskia resulted in many superb canvases.

Up to the day of his marriage, then, his twenty-eighth year, is his first period, marked by finish—his so-called phase of greenish-grey flesh-tones.

Saskia henceforth becomes his chief model. She seems to have delighted in posing for him. The Prado subject, variously suggested as *Artemisia—Cleopatra at her Toilet—*

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Bathsheba—Judith—and the *Bride of Tobias*—is a coarse portrait of Saskia with a child and attendant. The two large portraits of 1634 that went from the Princesse de Sagan to America, are *Rembrandt* in the military pose he so greatly loved to paint, and *Saskia.* The Buckingham Palace so-called *Burgomaster Pancras and his Wife*, in which the bride is trying on a pair of earrings in a mirror, are unmistakably *Rembrandt and Saskia.* It is of about this time. So the happy pair, content in each other, and in Rembrandt's art, played their lover comedies together ; and Rembrandt's quick eye would catch the scene on occasion —and he would paint Saskia seated on his knee, whilst he laughs at one out of the picture as the rollicking roysterer, raising a long glass of wine, pledging Wine, Woman, Feast and Laughter, as in his *Rembrandt and Saskia*, the year after his marriage (1635), now at Dresden. But the whole thing is make-believe. Rembrandt is no roysterer. It needed a Hals to paint this thing. These are but big children at play ; Hals's *Ramp and his Mistress* are the real drunken young dog and a girl at a tavern.

In the December of 1635, Saskia became a mother to Rembrandt's first-born child, the boy being christened Rombertus. And forthwith Rembrandt draws the babe in every mood. And in the evenings Rembrandt would sketch and etch mother and child. He made his etching of Saskia as the *Great Jewish Bride*—he made the *Little Jewish Bride* a couple of years later (1638).

Of his paintings of 1635, were the rather poor Dresden *Rape of Ganymede* by the eagle—and a portrait of a *Young Girl* at Cassel.

It was in the year of his marriage that Rembrandt gave free utterance to that astounding realism, wedded to a wide-ranging imagination, founded on a consummate

mastery of the tools of his craft, and given forth by means of a sonorous and resonant employment of haunting and compelling light and shade, that served his art to such noble purpose, and revealed him as one of the most sublime, independent, and original artists the world has ever seen. The wondrous instrument that the Tenebrosi had discovered, Rembrandt developed to its supreme utterance; and, in the doing, thrust forward the capacity and the orchestration of painting in prodigious fashion. Rembrandt's earnings and Saskia's dowry now rendered him independent of sitters, and he gave his art loose rein.

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He employed painting, as he employed etching, careless of formula, intent only on making art utter most fitly that which he desired to give forth. He was now etching freely. In 1635 he etched the well-known *Portrait of Jan Uytenbogaerd*, which begins his series of great etched portraits of important intention; and the remarkably fine character study in the portrait of *Jacob Cats*, the poet and keeper of the great seal, is of this year. At the same time he was etching the types of the people, *Travelling Musicians*, the *Mountebank*, the *Woman making Pancakes*, and the rest of it. In 1634 he had elaborated the needle's work into the *Angel appearing to the Shepherds*, and the exquisite *Christ and the Woman of Samaria* ("with the ruin," as it is called), the *Christ and the Disciples at Emmaus*, are of this year. Strange to say, Rembrandt was now working on etchings with his pupils—and signing the works. That he should have done so with an essentially personal medium like etching seems incredible; yet, it was so. Now, it must be remembered, that the work of a 'prentice belonged to his master; until the novice became free of his guild he could not sell his own work. The large *Descent from the Cross* by his assistant, Van Vliet, after the etching of the year

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before which had failed, is signed by Rembrandt and dated 1635. Christ driving the money-changers out of the Temple, in the *Purification of the Temple*, is one of Rembrandt's etchings of 1635. Lady Eastlake's sketch by Rembrandt of the *Ecce Homo*, to guide Van Vliet in the etching of it, proves Van Vliet's working under Rembrandt, whom he had followed to Amsterdam. But, as a matter of fact, Rembrandt's personal vision was a thing so apart, that assistants could help him little, happily for his great repute. And he himself felt this, for, when a work is not his, but touched up by him, he adds to his signature the "cum privileg," or "inventor," or Dutch "geretucherdt" (retouched) of a clean conscience. Rembrandt fortunately signed nearly all his works, and if that signature have no qualification, its claim stands strong for Rembrandt.

To get back to Rembrandt's paintings of 1635. The Hermitage has the large life-size *Abraham's Sacrifice*, of which the copy, touched by Rembrandt, is at Munich. Of 1635-36 is the Rothschild *Old Woman in a White Cap*. The Ellesmere *Fair-haired young Woman* is of 1634-5. The fine Liechtenstein *Portrait of Rembrandt*, with high upright feather in the jewelled cap, is of 1635; of which year also is one of those many studies of heads with fancy names, the Chatsworth *Rabbi*. The *Diana discovering the Pregnancy of Callisto* confirms Rembrandt's incapacity for realising mythology.

Rembrandt's chief sitters in these happy years were Saskia and himself; the Joseph *Saskia* is of 1636 or 1637. But, except that he is his own lay-figure, it can scarcely be claimed that the Rothschild *Standard-Bearer* of 1636 is a self-portrait of Rembrandt; he looks more like a theatrical super who has dropped in from the tavern. The "lay-figure," however, is finely lit.

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To this year belongs a wretched failure by Rembrandt, the Berlin painting of *Samson threatening his Father-in-law*. The Knowsley *Belshazzar's Feast* and the *Samson overcome by the Philistines* are of 1636, to which year belongs the Hermitage so-called *Danaë*, in which the nude Saskia upon a bed gives Rembrandt the use of a beautiful nude model that the strictnesses of Amsterdam had heretofore forbidden him.

WHEREIN SHALLOW RESPECTABILITY BROWBEATS A GIANT—NOT WITHOUT WIDE APPROVAL; AND THE LITTLE PEDANTS ARE CROWNED WITH THE BAYS

The Hermitage has the *Workers in the Vineyard*; and the fine portrait of a *Man* in a lace collar at the National Gallery is set down to this year—the features of which are uncommonly like Rembrandt himself.

To 1636 were due the etchings of the *Return of the Prodigal*, the *Stoning of St. Stephen*, and the wretchedly drawn *Rembrandt and his Wife*.

Rembrandt was now thirty, happily married these two years. But family jars were beginning that drew him and his loyal Saskia into the feud. But first let us glance at his pupils, his position, and his career.

Rembrandt's fame was considerable. He was becoming known outside Amsterdam, where he was now supreme; and pupils clamoured to be admitted to his studio. The Italianisers were growing old and out of the fashion. Old Lastman died in 1633, the year before Rembrandt's marriage; and the new vogue was leaving others in neglect. The younger men, as they came back from Italy, brought the teachings of Caravaggio with them, and the overwhelming interest of the Tenebrosi in strong light and shade. Lorraine and Elsheimer and Honthorst were wholly interested in the problem of light. The younger Dutch painters were imitating Rembrandt, the man of the new vogue.

We have seen Rembrandt taking pupils even as a youth

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at Leyden. When exactly he began to take 'prentices in Amsterdam is a vexed question; but it must have been fairly early. Dordrecht sent him pupils—there Benjamin Cuyp was being influenced by the young Rembrandt, and his famous nephew Albert Cuyp was looking to Rembrandt for lighting and arrangement. Paulus Lesire of Dordrecht frankly gave himself up to Rembrandtism, even to arraying his sitters in properties like those of Rembrandt. The men of Haarlem, of Delft, of Deventer, seized at the fashion—the Terborchs were markedly influenced. WILLEM DE POORTER and JACOB DE WET surrendered to discipleship.

Naturally pupils clamoured at the doors of his studio. One of the first must have been JACOB ADRIAENSZ BACKER, born in 1608-9, a facile, brilliant draughtsman, who is said to have served a short apprenticeship to him. FERDINAND BOL came at about sixteen to him, and became one of his greatest pupils; and had as fellow-pupil GOVERT FLINCK. Soon thereafter came to him ERCKHOUT. Other pupils were JAN VICTORS, CORNELIS VAN BEYEREN, and PHILIPS KONINCK, the landscape-painter.

Now whilst Rembrandt had pupils, he employed them but little on his own works; and when he did so, he signed the fact. He set each pupil in a separate cell, so that one should not influence the other, but should develop an independent vision. He insisted on order, as the old story bears witness, when, coming to the studio, and hearing a pupil in his cell call out to a nude girl model with a laugh, "Here we are for all the world like Adam and Eve in Paradise!" broke in with "And like them you shall be driven out!" and hunted them into the street with their hastily snatched up garments.

Rembrandt was now filling his house with curios and works of art. He went to auctions and bought freely. He

bought sketches by Brouwer in 1635, a Rubens *Hero and Leander* in 1637. He would send his pupils to sales to buy for him. When he went himself it was his habit to silence all rivals by bidding an enormous advance on the first bid, which, he explained to a surprised expostulant, he did in order to "raise the status of his calling." Of his possessions he was a generous lender to his fellow-artists. The which brings us to the sorry charge that grew against him as his ill-fortune fell upon him—and it was not far off—that he was a miser, and a sordid one. A story is told that one of his pupils painted a coin on the floor to see Rembrandt pick it up; but this scarcely proves avarice. To accuse of avarice a man who notoriously squandered his money with prodigal hand is farcical. Money slipt through his careless fingers his life long—his earnings, his wife's dowry, his several legacies as they came to him. Careless of his own interests, spendthrift, and wholly without sense of money, he might be justly accused of thriftlessness and extravagance, but these are scarce the habits of a miser. On the contrary, as fast as money came in, it poured out; and, unfortunately, he was living largely on credit. He squandered money on jewels and ornaments for Saskia, and on handsome silver vessels from which to paint. The which brings us to the family feud that was to fall heavily upon the young pair.

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Some of Saskia's kin began to say bitter things about the extravagance of the pair. There had been ugly lawsuits amongst the kin about property; and Rembrandt had shown a leaning towards one faction, and Rembrandt's side had won. The defeated kin forthwith attacked Saskia's extravagance.

The grave Dudley *Swalmius* and the Bridgewater *Man* are both portraits of ministers painted in the year 1637. The Louvre contains a third portrait of *Rembrandt*, dated

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1637. But it is to the Hermitage at St. Petersburg that we must go for one of Rembrandt's supreme masterpieces, painted in this year of 1637—the superbly lit and hauntingly painted self-portrait of *Rembrandt as a Polish Nobleman*, generally called *Sobieski*, whom by its age and date it could not have been. Poor Rembrandt's works went through a weary stage of renaming in Georgian and Victorian days, and as they dubbed the *Standard-Bearer* "William Tell," so they called the Hermitage portrait "Sobieski." But he who has become familiar with Rembrandt's features cannot hesitate to find Rembrandt masquerading in the studio properties; and what a glorious moment of inspiration it was! There are Rembrandt's eye, his nose, every feature, to the furrow between the eyebrows that tells of the searching and observant inquisition of the artist. And it is fit and proper that this, one of the portraits of all time, one of the paintings of the ages, should be of Rembrandt who wrought by the skill of his hands into resonant and orchestral music the powerful utterance that light and shadow may yield when employed by compelling genius. Here is an art in these sixteen-hundreds such as Italy never dreamed of. And to add to his triumphs he painted the superb characteristic landscape of the *Stone Bridge over a Canal*.

In this year of 1637 Rembrandt twice painted Saskia nude, as *Susanna at the Bath*—of which The Hague holds the unmutilated design.

The Book of Tobit seems to have impelled Rembrandt to some of his most imaginative flights; and this year he painted the Louvre *Angel Raphael leaving Tobias*, with its masterly treatment of complex lighting and strong light and shade enhancing the mysteries in exquisite fashion.

The etchings of *Abraham dismissing Hagar* and *Abraham caressing Isaac*, the fine *Old Man with a Square Beard and*

Velvet Cap, and the well-known *Young Man seated Musing*, are of this twelvemonth.

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The etching of *Adam and Eve in Paradise* belongs to 1638, as do the *Joseph relating his Dreams*, and the etched portraits of *Rembrandt in a Cap with Feather* and the *Rembrandt in a Flat Cap*, in the warrior pose. To this year also belongs the dated portrait of *Samson's Marriage Feast* at Dresden, in which Saskia is the central figure, and in which we see Rembrandt come to the mastery of impression in large groups at which he has long arrived in single figures. Buckingham Palace possesses the *Noli Me Tangere* of the same date.

Rembrandt, incensed by family attacks on Saskia's extravagance, brought a lawsuit for calumny against them, which he lost in the July of 1638; and it is clear that, in spite of his sworn evidence that he and Saskia were "richly and superabundantly provided with means," they were in money difficulties and were borrowing freely. Five days after the New Year, in the January of 1639, he bought a house in the Joden-Breestraat, in the centre of the Jewish quarter, and there ended his several flittings from his first warehouse home in Amsterdam. Of the 13,000 florins for this house he paid off half on the death of Saskia's aunt and godmother in 1640, and of his own mother a little later; unfortunately he paid off no more, to his later undoing. But all was now rose-colour; and he entered into possession in the May of 1639, glorying in its adornment. His working time was jealously guarded against all comers, however great. He joined neither Painters' Guild, civic bodies, nor civic guards. He went to no social gatherings of writers and wits and artists. He detested the Italian theories of art that they adored. He detested "established principles," "the usefulness of antiques,"

"Raphael's draughtsmanship and admirable works," and "academic teaching," stoutly holding that "Nature should be the artist's guide, and to her laws alone should the artist bow." Sandrart could abuse him even whilst he imitated him. Patrician society did not call Rembrandt; he found life more near Nature amongst the poor and the lowly—his sympathy was with the people. As for society he found it in his home, with a few close friends. And, alas! Saskia's health was giving him serious concern. Her eldest boy, born in 1635, died. A daughter was born to her on the 1st of the July of 1638, called Cornelia after Rembrandt's mother, but also died. On the 29th of the July of 1640 a little girl, the second Cornelia, was born, only to die a month thereafter. Rembrandt's etchings of his beloved Saskia now show her face pinched with the threat of death. In 1639 an etching of *Tita* shows that Rembrandt has called her sister to her care. The grave had taken child after child; and Rembrandt and Saskia were knowing worse sorrow than the biting tongues of relatives. His etching of *Youth surprised by Death* is of this year.

In the famous Dresden *Bittern* (a sportsman with a dead bittern), painted in 1639, Rembrandt achieves a masterpiece in lighting, chiaroscuro, and resonance. It is an astounding work. The painting shows his mastery of still life. The Cartwright *Peacock and Hen* is of the same time.

The portrait of the young lady known as the *Woman of Utrecht* is dated 1639, in which the girl stands full face, arrayed in black, holding a fan. Cassel has a *Portrait of a Woman* of this time, with a fur mantle over a green dress, two pinks in her gloved left hand. The full-length Cassel so-called *Jan Six* is of this year—and the guessing includes a self-portrait! But this is no self-portrait; here is no interest in his great problems of lighting.

OF PAINTING

To 1639 belong the etchings of *Rembrandt leaning on a Sill*; the elaborate portrait of the Treasurer of Holland, *Uytenbogaerd*, known as the "Gold-weigher"; and the large plate of the *Death of the Virgin*, a masterpiece.

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To 1640 belongs the National Gallery portrait of *Rembrandt* in a cap. In the September of the year he painted it his mother died, just after he painted the bust-portrait of *Rembrandt's Mother* (1639) at the Belvedere.

Rembrandt now withdrew closer into his home-life, and he painted family pictures on a smaller scale, returning somewhat to his earlier detail and finish. The poetic Louvre *Carpenter's Household* and the Grosvenor House *Meeting of St. Elizabeth and the Virgin* are of 1640. Of this year also were the Yarborough *Portrait of an Old Woman*, seated in a chair, and the famous portrait of *Rembrandt's Gilder*, Paulus Doomer, father to Rembrandt's pupil LAMBERT DOOMER. In all of this work, from his own portrait to that of his gilder, is that careful touch and early style to which he reverted awhile from his vital, tense, bold, and powerful brushing. The Brunswick *Storm* and Wallace *Mountainous Landscape* show Rembrandt still painting studio scenery, living in a world of dreams. He is concerned with the poetry of light and shadow and imagination—the realising of the word Mountain or Storm—just as he had been in the Oldenburg *Landscape at the Mouth of a River*, the Lansdowne *Canal*, and the Northbrook *Landscape*.

His fine etching of the *Man with Square-cut Beard in a Divided Cap* is of 1640.

In 1641 Rembrandt wrought his Dresden *Manoah's Prayer*; and of this time is the Six portrait of *Anna Wymer* at Amsterdam (1641). And this and the Brussels portrait of a *Man*, whose wife, the *Lady with a Fan*, is at

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Buckingham Palace, all show the careful style and finish to which he went back awhile. Of these the masterpiece is the noble work of the *Lady with a Fan*, gloriously lit, and marvellously vivid. The Lanckoroncki pictures at Vienna, *The Jewish Bride* and *The Bride's Father counting out her Dowry* are given to him, in spite of a certain chilly colour and handling, which have raised grave question as to Rembrandt's creation of them, being more like the work of his pupil CHRISTOPHEL PAUDISS; and the two Ashburton portraits, with the signature of Rembrandt forged, are by BOL. The Ashburnham double portrait of *Renier Anslo and his Wife* (or mother or visitor) is of this year; Rembrandt had etched the minister in 1640.

Landscape now enters into Rembrandt's art; and a travelling menagerie coming to the town brought forth drawings of elephants from life. He was to paint landscape and to etch it with profound genius.

His second *Baptism of the Eunuch*, his *Portrait of a Child*, sometimes called William II, his *Man with a Crucifix and Chain*, and the *Card-Player*, were etchings of this year. And now emerge his etched landscapes, the *Mill-Sail above a Cottage*, the large *Landscape with a Cottage and Hay-Barn*, and the *Windmill*, known as "Rembrandt's Mill."

In the September of 1641 was born to Rembrandt and Saskia a little son, whom they called Titus after Titia, who had died in the June. Thereafter Saskia began to fade away, though the Dresden full-face, half-length, so-called *Saskia*, offering a flower, gives small hint of it.

In 1642 he painted the Hermitage *Reconciliation of David and Absalom*, but a masterpiece was on his easel—he was painting the world-renowned *Night Watch*, his great Doelen piece at Amsterdam. Flinging aside the stiff conventional portraiture of the civic guards then in vogue,

OF PAINTING

Rembrandt set the captain, Frans Banning Cocq, in the centre of a busy martial scene, which illustrates the proper title of the picture: *The Young Lord of Purmerland* (Cocq) *gives the order to march to his Lieutenant, Herr van Vlaerdingen*, and it was known as *The March Out*; it is clearly a call to arms. Rembrandt caught the bustle of the moment of alarm, drum beating, weapons being seized, dog barking —all is action. The company is about to fall in.

WHEREIN SHALLOW RESPECTABILITY BROWBEATS A GIANT—NOT WITHOUT WIDE APPROVAL; AND THE LITTLE PEDANTS ARE CROWNED WITH THE BAYS

Unfortunately the picture was mutilated to make it fit a change of position: two figures being sliced off to one side, and part of the drum to the other, as Lunden's copy in the National Gallery shows. Its filthy state caused it to look like a night-piece—hence its name before it was cleaned. Rembrandt was now glorying in his deep, golden colour schemes.

The etchings of the *Little Raising of Lazarus*, the *Woman with a Basket*, *Woman in large Hood*, and *Man in an Arbour*, and the *Cottage with White Palisades*, are of 1642.

Rembrandt put the last touch on the *Night Watch* in the spring of 1642. In the June Saskia passed away, to the bitter grief of Rembrandt, leaving him the little Titus, scarce nine months old. He returned from her grave to a home made desolate; and worse, he realised in his loneliness that his vogue was passing. His chiaroscuro was being openly attacked. The *Night Watch* struck a deadly blow to his fortunes and repute. It was looked upon as an impertinence and affectation. It was "artistic." The rank and file of the company considered themselves badly hidden in shadow. They went henceforth to other artists for their portraits. Rembrandt entered the grey road of Adversity.

We are wont to think of genius in art living in a world pulsing with artistic achievement, the masterpiece being

THE GREAT DUTCHMEN

created for a wide group of enthusiastic "connoisseurs." It has never been so. The bulk of the antique Athenians, of the Italians of the Renaissance, and the Dutchmen of the sixteen-hundreds, were as rank Philistines, as conceited in their self-sufficiency, as are the bulk of the cultured classes in London and New York to-day. The artist is always ahead of his time. But the artist reveals life to the less dowered; and each master, though he be crucified and stoned for it, adds to the experience of the race. The stout burgesses of Amsterdam and of Haarlem were little concerned with the art that has saved them from oblivion; and few knew or cared that the *Night Watch* was to make them immortal, so that their portraits were but prominent on the painted canvas. The self-appointed "connoisseurs" and critics were lauding the Italians!

The *Holy Family*, long known as *The Cradle*, is a painting of this time.

The vigorously painted Steengracht *Bathsheba*, at The Hague, of 1643 shows Rembrandt painting a beautiful woman nude. The Berlin broadly handled and vivid portrait of a *Young Woman*, supposed to be a memory of Saskia, which is questionable, is dated 1643. To this year belongs the *Old Woman* at the Hermitage—called, for some stupid desire to put a tag to the thing, *Rembrandt's Mother*; her hands are folded over a book in her lap—and the Amsterdam masterpiece of *Elizabeth Bas*. Dresden has a portrait of a *Young Soldier* which is said to be a portrait of Rembrandt, though the thin face and the date of 1643 would challenge this; indeed there is question even whether Rembrandt painted it. The Buckingham Palace *Rembrandt* shows him to be rapidly ageing, and the missing last figure of the 164- would, if clear, probably show it to be two or three years later.

VIII

REMBRANDT

1606 – 1669

DUTCH SCHOOL OF AMSTERDAM

"THE COMPANY OF FRANCIS BANNING COCQ"

or, the so-called

"NIGHT WATCH"

(ROYAL MUSEUM, AMSTERDAM)

It is in reality a day scene although it is known to most people as the "Night Watch," owing to the mass of dirt that had collected upon it.

The *Travelling Peasants* and the *Hog* are etchings of this year. But it was in landscape that he wrought his more famous etching of *The Three Trees*, in which he masters cloud-scape and the movements of the heavens, with a lofty sense of distances, in spite of the uninteresting trees that give the etching its name—the mood and threat of the thing, the living light in it, give fire to this work.

WHEREIN SHALLOW RESPECTABILITY BROWBEATS A GIANT—NOT WITHOUT WIDE APPROVAL; AND THE LITTLE PEDANTS ARE CROWNED WITH THE BAYS

To 1644 belongs Rembrandt's National Gallery *Woman taken in Adultery*. He is clearly treating the public taste with contempt, and is now freely surrendering himself to the majestic sense of the hauntingness of luminous shadows. The so-called portrait of the *Connétable de Bourbon* and the Panshanger *Young Savant* have the breadth of handling and the vision of this time even if they had not been dated.

The *Shepherd and his Family* is an etching of this year.

The Hermitage *Holy Family* is of 1645, as are the two small paintings at Berlin of the *Angel warning Joseph to flee into Egypt*, and *Tobit's Wife with the Kid*. The Dulwich *Girl at a Window*, and the Demidoff *Girl in the Black-and-scarlet Uniform of an Orphanage* (now in America), are of this year, as is probably the Dresden *Woman weighing Gold*. The *J. Cornelis Sylvius*, long known as *Justus Lipsius*, is dated 1645. Thus, it will be seen, the public tide passes by him; he paints friends, and he is in the midst of the Jewish quarter where he sees old men in the street that call to his art—the Berlin *Rabbi* is a vigorous work of this year, and the fine profile *Old Man* in the plumed black cap in the Hermitage, as well as the Scarsdale *White-bearded Old Man* and the Dresden *Old Man*, which has been largely repainted. The Carlsruhe *Rembrandt* (if Rembrandt), shows the artist to be rapidly ageing; on the eve of forty, he is already careworn and brooding, the moustache has been shaven off, and the flowing locks are cut down.

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The etchings of 1645 are the *Abraham and his Son Isaac*, the rare *St. Peter* and *Riposo*, and probably the *Meditating Philosopher*. He was now, however, much in the fields, and to them we owe the consummate aerial landscape of *Six's Bridge*. He now rid himself of studio scenery, founded by the Italianisers, and went to Holland for inspiration in landscape. His sketch-book is always busy. And to landscape we owe the superb etching of the *View of Omval* of this year. Landscape increases its importance in his art.

Cassel possesses Rembrandt's *Winter Landscape* of 1646.

Though fashion was passing by Rembrandt's door, the Prince of Orange was above fashion—he not only ordered a couple of pictures from Rembrandt in this year, but doubled his former price. The *Circumcision* has vanished; Munich has the *Adoration of the Shepherds*, and the National Gallery a replica of it by Rembrandt.

Of his etchings was the *Christ on the Cross between the Two Thieves*.

The Cassel *Holy Family* is of 1647. The Berlin *Susanna and the Elders*, which once belonged to Sir Joshua Reynolds, and the Louvre *Susanna*, are of this time, painted with great power and romance, to which he brought all the resources of his astoundingly eloquent light and shade, glowing colour, dramatic grip, sense of magnificence, picturesque imagination, and consummate handling. The Harinxma portrait of an *Old Man* is of this year, and probably the Warneck *Fair Young Man*, both small, but astoundingly broadly handled. Leipzig has a portrait of *Rembrandt*, a bust, full face, the greater part of the face in shadow from a large violet cap. The Duke of Westminster has Rembrandt's portrait of his artist-friend *Berchem* and his *Wife*. Dublin has the *Rest in Egypt*.

OF PAINTING

The etching of the *Rest in Egypt* is of this year, as also the portrait of *Jan Six*, whose home was a treasure-house of art. Rembrandt had painted Six's mother in 1641, and a close friendship between the two men followed. He also etched the portrait of the landscape-painter *Asselyn*, whom the Dutch painters in Rome called Crabbetje, or "the little crab," from his crooked, claw-like fingers. Asselyn had just settled at Amsterdam. Unfortunately we know of no etching of Rembrandt's closest friend, the Dutch landscape-painter ROELANDT ROGHMAN, who was to share Rembrandt's black days of adversity, and many of whose landscapes were to be signed with Rembrandt's name by forgers.

WHEREIN SHALLOW RESPECTABILITY BROWBEATS A GIANT—NOT WITHOUT WIDE APPROVAL; AND THE LITTLE PEDANTS ARE CROWNED WITH THE BAYS

Now Saskia had left her whole estate to Rembrandt, without interference by others, trusting him implicitly to guard a half for Titus. Her kin had respected her wishes, and left affairs severely alone, but Rembrandt's affairs were so notoriously embarrassed that ruin loomed and threatened large. Her kin now felt bound to make an effort to save the boy's heritage. Saskia was dead five years, when, in 1647, they insisted on an inventory of Saskia's and Rembrandt's estate at her death. This was settled at 40,750 florins, with Titus's heritage therefore at 20,375 florins.

To 1648 belong the Bridgewater *Hannah teaching the Child Samuel in the Temple*. The Hermitage *Nun and Child* may be some years later, if by Rembrandt at all. The Louvre possesses the *Good Samaritan* and the *Christ with his Disciples at Emmaus*. In the *Good Samaritan* Rembrandt has achieved the dramatic mood with astounding skill—he was a very master of emotion. And with what mystery and genius he has wrought the famous *Christ and his Disciples at Emmaus*!

The etching of *Rembrandt Drawing*, the fine *Beggars*

THE GREAT DUTCH-MEN

at the Door of a House, and the *Jews' Synagogue*, are all of this year, as was the *Marriage of Jason and Creüsa* made for his friend Burgomaster Six.

Now, this year of 1648 saw the complete triumph of Holland over her brutal and bitter enemy. Spain sullenly recognised her independence in the Peace of Westphalia. We shall see Terborch paint the *Treaty of Munster*; Van der Helst, now Rembrandt's rival, and Govart Flinck, who had supplanted his master in public favour, were called by the civic guards to paint the large canvases which flank the *Night Watch* — Rembrandt was wholly forgotten. Wounded by the neglect, he painted the Rotterdam cartoon of *The Pacification of Holland*, which did his repute small good in spite of its many masterly passages.

To 1649 belong the Cassel landscape of *The Ruin* and the Panshanger *Equestrian Portrait*—said to be William the Silent's famous grandson, Marshal Turenne.

Of the etchings of the year was the famous masterpiece of *Christ healing the Sick*, world-renowned as *The Hundred Guilder Piece*. To this large work Rembrandt gave enormous pains. Rembrandt ever compelled his craft to fulfil his intention—his whole art is ever directed to the perfect utterance of the mood desired. His dramatic intention dominates all. As he chose his colours and the wood for his panels with infinite care, so he chose his papers for his prints—and his personal printing of his etchings gave him complete command of the whole craft. He wiped the same plate differently for different prints, so that there may well be confusion as to "states" amongst the "experts."

It is the most comical part of the laws of the academic and the "expert," that they hold up Rembrandt as a "purist," as one who subscribed to their little finicking

rules—he who cared nothing for petty academic laws and roughly condemned them!

WHEREIN SHALLOW RESPECTABILITY BROWBEATS A GIANT—NOT WITHOUT WIDE APPROVAL; AND THE LITTLE PEDANTS ARE CROWNED WITH THE BAYS

The first day of the October of 1649 saw the beginning of a tragi-comedy in Rembrandt's household. His boy Titus had been of delicate health, and his old nurse Geertje Direk had watched over the lad with motherly care. She made this year a will in the boy's favour, which was evidently the result of some freakish whim—whether she desired to win to the place of the lad's mother, or whether she were grown jealous of the comely girl who figured in the *Susanna* of three years before, or for whatsoever reason, the legal arrangements were signed on the first day of October over the bargain of her will with Rembrandt. A few days later she turned virulently against Rembrandt and bitterly assailed him. By 1650 madness was upon her, and she had to be shut up in an asylum.

Now one of Rembrandt's two witnesses on that first of October 1649 was a young girl-servant of his, named Hendrickje Stoffels, aged twenty-three. Whatever the relations of this girl were with Rembrandt at the time, the comely girl was soon sitting to him for the nude, and was his mistress.

The year 1650 yields us the large Hermitage *Jacob lamenting the supposed Death of Joseph* and *Abraham entertaining the Angels*, both painted life-size. The Berlin *Vision of Daniel* reveals Rembrandt's poetic sense of the sublime in landscape. The Hermitage fancy portrait, *Minerva*, is probably of this year; and as probably the three-quarter-length of an *Old Woman* meditating, spectacles in fingers, with a huge closed Bible on her knees, and known as *After the Reading*—a very finely painted work, resonant and haunting. The Cambridge portrait of *Rembrandt* in broad-brimmed hat with feathers that cast a shade on the face,

THE GREAT DUTCH-MEN

and wearing cuirass and gorget, hand on sword-hilt, with all its masterly treatment of light and shade and golden harmony, is of this year.

The Cassel *Ruin* is a painted landscape of about this year in which Rembrandt is still dreaming landscapes—Tivoli is set amongst Dutch cottages. Of the etchings is the *Christ in the midst of His Disciples*, the *Landscape with Canal and Swans*, and the well-known *Shell*.

The Lacroix *Landscape with Swans*, however, is less Italianised; and in the Lansdowne *Windmill*, if by him, he realises the mood with great power, but it is still markedly Italian in its figures, and hints at other vision.

To 1651 belongs the Brunswick *Christ appearing to the Magdalene* (*Noli me tangere*), a work of rare dignity and pathos in which the arisen Christ steps out of the land of shadows into the presence of the heart-broken Magdalene.

The etchings include the *Flight into Egypt*, the *Star of the Kings*, the *Adoration of the Shepherds*, the *Triumph of Mordecai*, the *Funeral of Christ*, the *Nativity*, the *Christ disputing with the Doctors in the Temple*, and the astoundingly emotional *Tobit Blind*, in which, with a few strokes, Rembrandt not only gives us a fine arrangement, but with the wizardry of his genius suggests the cautious and stumbling movement of the blind. And of this same year is the superb rendering of the supernatural in the famous etching of *Doctor Faustus*, wherein the dignified figure of the magician stands up at his table keenly gazing at the apparition that he has conjured from the mirror, Rembrandt arousing the sense of the supernatural by the wizardry of his skill of artistry. Of his etched portraits was the *Clement de Jonghe*.

The year 1652 is marked by the superb painting of *Hendrickje Stoffels*, now at the Louvre. The comely girl is arrayed in the fancy dress so dear to Rembrandt, and her

IX

REMBRANDT
1606 – 1669

DUTCH SCHOOL OF AMSTERDAM

"HENDRICKJE STOFFELS"

(LOUVRE)

Life-size. Painted in oil on canvas. 2 ft. 4½ in. × 1 ft. 11⅝ in. (0·72 × 0·60).

beauty is greatly enhanced thereby. Here we see the sweet-natured and loyal woman who was to be a faithful friend to Rembrandt during the remainder of her life. Rembrandt painted the work with glowing colour and exquisite power. Hendrickje bore a child to Rembrandt in the August of this year; but the child died at birth.

WHEREIN SHALLOW RESPECTABILITY BROWBEATS A GIANT—NOT WITHOUT WIDE APPROVAL; AND THE LITTLE PEDANTS ARE CROWNED WITH THE BAYS

Of the etchings of 1652 is the fine *David on his Knees*, and the *Christ Preaching*, long known as "The Little Tomb," in which the type of the Christ is seen painted in the head in the Kann Collection. The portrait of *Doctor Bonus* is also of this year.

Rembrandt was now making those superb drawings of landscape which are amongst his master-work, of which the Duke of Devonshire has so noble a collection. Wonderful as was the exquisiteness of his etched line, it was almost surpassed by the eloquent suggestion and consummate tact of his drawings with the pen, washed in with the brush. And it was thus in his sketch-books that his nervous and masculine fingers recorded the moods of that deep vision and brooding sensing which pondered upon and felt so passionately the romance of the wind-filled aerial heavens and the flat lands that his people had torn from the rude North Sea and the harshnesses of Spain.

His etchings answer to the discipline, and he gave forth his *Village with the Square Tower*, the *Arched Landscape with Flock of Sheep*, the *Canal*, the *Peasant carrying Milk Pails*, the *Village near the High Road*, the *Obelisk* (1650), the *Landscape with a ruined Tower*, the *Gold-weigher's Field* (1651), and the *Landscape with a Vista* (1652).

And about this time Rembrandt becomes deeply interested in animals, and his stuffed lions cease from troubling.

Though Rembrandt saw the tide of popular favour

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passing by his door towards lesser men, the young art-students made no such mistake, and they came to him in numbers. From foreign lands they came—from Germany, Michiel Willemans, Ulric Mayr of Augsburg, Frans Wulfhagen of Bremen, Christophel Paudiss from Saxony, Juriaen Ovens; from Denmark, Bernard Keilh or Keilham, who served him eight long years. Of the young Dutchmen many are now but a name; of such were HEYMAN DULLAERT, JAN VAN GLABBECK, JOHAN HINDRICHSEN, and ADRIAEN VERDOEL. LEUPENIUS is known only by his drawings.

Of JACOBUS LEVECQ the Salting Collection has a Vandyckesque *Portrait of a Man*; of CORNELIS DROST Cassel has a Rembrandtesque *Magdalene at the Feet of Christ*; of JACOB VAN DORST Dresden has a *Portrait of a Man*; G. HORST painted a *Continence of Scipio*; of HENDRICK HEERSCHOP Cassel has a *Card-Player*; C. RENESSE copied his master's lions; and ESAIAS BOURSSE, who is represented at Aix-la-Chapelle, at the Wallace, at Berlin, and at Amsterdam, was pupil to Rembrandt. Of JACOB ESSELENS Brunswick has a *Landscape*, as have Copenhagen and Rotterdam, in which are huntsmen and animals—it is difficult to discover Rembrandt's schooling in this pupil. FARNERIUS and LAMBERT DOOMER are, however, clearly indebted to the art of their master.

Of pupils who were to come to wider fame and develop an art of their own were NICOLAS MAES and CAREL FABRITIUS.

The great intent of Rembrandt in landscape was creating a large school of Dutch landscape-painters.

But in spite of Saskia's dowry, of the fees from pupils, of the wide vogue into which Rembrandt had early won, of the comparatively large fees he had received for his works, of his unrivalled position, and of the wide demand for his etch-

ings, Rembrandt was now heavily in debt. He had no sense of money. It was no sooner in his hands than it melted. Generous of temperament, free of hand, impulsive by nature, he flung money to relations in difficulty or to friends in want; he satisfied every whim of his own for collecting. When his mother died, Rembrandt treated his brothers and sisters with great generosity in the division of the estate. Frugal of life himself, he poured out money for works of art. He had showered jewels upon his beloved Saskia. When money came in, instead of paying his creditors, he bought more works of art. He was soon hopelessly entangled with the moneylenders. On the top of all came trouble about his house. When he had paid half its value, he ceased not only to pay the rest at the agreed intervals, but from 1649 (ten years after buying it), he ceased even to pay interest on the debt, and then dodged the rates and taxes, so that the long-suffering owner, Christoffel Thysz, had to do so. Thysz had treated Rembrandt with great forbearance, but human nature at last rebelled. The February of 1653 saw him make formal demand for payment. Rembrandt rather scurvily challenged the title-deeds; but was cornered by Thysz who suggested that he should pay or surrender the house. Rembrandt made an effort to collect money owing to him; but the moment it came into his hands he could not resist the temptation to spend it, and again it missed the pocket of Thysz. In the September of 1653 he made another effort by borrowing the money, but he had not the heart to let Thysz have it all—paid him part, and mortgaged the house to discharge the rest of the debt. Rembrandt was digging the pit very deep for an ugly fall.

WHEREIN SHALLOW RESPECTABILITY BROWBEATS A GIANT—NOT WITHOUT WIDE APPROVAL; AND THE LITTLE PEDANTS ARE CROWNED WITH THE BAYS

In 1653 Rembrandt painted the *Scholar with a Bust of Homer*, now in the Huntingdon Collection in America.

To 1653 belongs the etching of the *Three Crosses*, in which he arouses the senses by the stormy grandeur of the scene, created by a powerful playing upon the gamut of black and white. The etchings of *Doctor Van der Linden* and of Rembrandt's faithful old friend *Coppenol*, the writing-master, were of about this time—indeed, we may forgive Coppenol his conceit, for he remained a loyal friend to Rembrandt when the world deserted him.

The Louvre has a fine seated nude figure of Hendrickje Stoffels as *Bathsheba*, painted in 1654—an old woman at her feet—in which Rembrandt's glowing flesh painting reaches to superb colour, and the dramatic statement of the wife of Uriah as she considers the message of David, flattered by the proposal, is finely rendered. In the same year he painted her handsome being again in the rich and famous canvas of the *Woman Bathing*, at the National Gallery.

The love of Rembrandt and Hendrickje was now causing scandal, and on the 23rd of July in this same 1654 Hendrickje was called before the elders of the church and severely browbeaten, being refused the Sacrament. In the October she became the mother of a daughter, who was acknowledged by Rembrandt and called Cornelia after his mother. A peasant Hendrickje was; indeed, she could only sign her own name with the cross of illiteracy; wife in the law she may not have been; but a good and faithful wife in fact and act the handsome girl was to be to the end, and a good mother to little Titus.

Rembrandt was now a happy man again, and he pours forth works — paintings and etchings. His home was shared by a happy companion. And there he was happy in a frugal life and hard work amongst his art-treasures, his properties and armour and curiosities—all chosen for their fine art or fine craftsmanship.

OF PAINTING

The Hermitage *Girl with a Broom* was probably of this time, painted from some little peasant-girl who helped Hendrickje in her household cares; and the Stockholm *Girl at a Window* is the same child a little older—much like what Hendrickje herself had probably been as a girl.

WHEREIN SHALLOW RESPECTABILITY BROWBEATS A GIANT—NOT WITHOUT WIDE APPROVAL; AND THE LITTLE PEDANTS ARE CROWNED WITH THE BAYS

To this year of 1654 belong also the three noble Hermitage paintings of an *Old Woman*, long labelled "Rembrandt's Mother," of which one is world famous, astounding in the powerful art by which Rembrandt's wonderful brush has uttered the old age of woman; the figure being so wrapt in the inward gazing serenity of the winter of life that the thing seems to breathe and move. He painted her in these three schemes, bust, three-quarter-length, and nearly full-length, in almost the same pose, where she sat in an arm-chair, her old hands folded on her lap. The once beautiful face, now scarred by suffering and time, as she dreams of other days, haunts us as it has haunted generations. Copenhagen holds another great example of this *Old Woman*, still older, her hands wrapped in a kerchief; and Rembrandt painted her again, a rosary in her hand, in 1661. Never has the mood and impression of old age been more consummately rendered than in these works wherein the forthright brush of Rembrandt selected, with unerring tact, all that was essential to create that impression, and rejected all superfluous detail. Rembrandt has never been surpassed in his dramatic power to state character. He wedded a realistic force with a spiritual vision.

The portrait of *Burgomaster Six* proves that misfortune had not chilled the friendship of the two men. Six draws on his gloves; and Rembrandt catches the act with unerring force, and his skill in selection and his rapid decision of touch reveal the master at his full strength.

THE GREAT DUTCH-MEN

The Hermitage has a portrait of an *Old Lady* also of this time, and two portraits of old men.

The Schwerin *Old Man*, long given to Ribera, is now given to Rembrandt; and the fine Dresden *Old Man* is dated 1654; the powerfully handled, white-haired head in its broad-brimmed cap is painted with unfaltering decision. The Cassel *Man in Armour* is of about this time.

This year of 1654 saw Rembrandt very busy etching, much concerned with the New Testament—the *Circumcision*—the *Presentation*—the *Flight into Egypt: the Holy Family crossing a Rill*—the *Holy Family: the Virgin asleep*—*Christ disputing with the Doctors*—the so-called *Return from Egypt*—*Christ in the Garden of Olives*—the *Disciples at Emmaus*—and the *Descent from the Cross*. This also was the year of his *Sport of Golf* (or Kolef).

Meantime shrewd business men were using Rembrandt's weaknesses to their own ends. In this year Dirck van Cattenburch lent him a considerable sum of money, in return for which Rembrandt was to pay him with works of art. Rembrandt was now making a real effort to pay off his creditors; and to this end we shall find the next two or three years to be very prolific in works by him.

In 1655 Rembrandt painted that astounding masterpiece of still life, the *Carcase of a Bullock*, to be seen at the Louvre, which has been a lesson to thousands of artists.

Rembrandt's son Titus was now about fourteen, and in this year the master painted his beloved and affectionate *Titus* in the Kann picture, in fancy dress, like some boyish dreamy Hamlet, in which the lad's likeness to Saskia is very marked. It was the year in which the delicate boy gave some sign of artistic gifts which he seems never to have developed any further.

Stockholm has a pair of portraits of an *Old Man* and of

his *Old Wife* in a turban; Cassel has a small panel of an *Old Man* in profile, and a *Man in a Fur Cap*, of which the Louvre has a copy. The little panel of the *Tribute Money* is of 1655. Berlin has a *Joseph accused by the Wife of Potiphar*, and the Hermitage another—a subject which brought out all Rembrandt's sense of glowing colour. Glasgow is fortunate in possessing Rembrandt's well-known *Man in Armour*, wondrously lit, and held by the romance of the subject.

WHEREIN SHALLOW RESPECTABILITY BROWBEATS A GIANT—NOT WITHOUT WIDE APPROVAL; AND THE LITTLE PEDANTS ARE CROWNED WITH THE BAYS

This year also saw Rembrandt doing much etching—*Abraham's Sacrifice* and the large *Ecce Homo*.

The kin of Saskia now became nervous about the boy Titus's heritage; and in the May of 1656 Rembrandt made over the value of his house to his son. But, as we have seen, he had already mortgaged it to raise money for its payment, and his mortgagees were grown alarmed. They denounced this act of Rembrandt's as a fraudulent endeavour to jockey them—as indeed it was no pretty act—and thenceforth began a bitter series of lawsuits that were to be most disastrous to the artist.

The inventory of Rembrandt's home in the July of 1656 gives us some idea of the treasure he had gathered there. A year thereafter he was to be driven from that home and stripped of his beloved belongings. He was about to enter upon that miserable penury that dogged the finest Dutch genius—Frans Hals and Ruysdael, Van Goyen and Van der Neer, Hobbema and Pieter de Hooch and Jan Steen and Vermeer of Delft.

The Hermitage holds a portrait of a seated *Young Woman* leaning on a table on which are a prayer-book and some apples, painted in 1656. Copenhagen has a *Fair-haired Young Man* and his *Wife holding a Pink*, both richly attired. The Cassel *Mathematician*, a portrait re-

markable for the mood of pensive concentration, is of this year, though its authorship by Rembrandt is challenged. *Dr. Arnold Tholinx*, whom he had etched the year before, he painted in 1656. Amsterdam has the badly burnt *Dr. J. Deyman's Lesson in Anatomy* of this time, with its much discussed foreshortened dead figure, over which the critics and experts talk and wrangle as if it were a matter of the slightest importance in what position the gruesome "subject" were placed. Rembrandt was now evidently pressed for money even for his canvases, for this was painted over an old picture, and the singeing brought out an incongruous Cupid's head to peep at the dead man. Cassel has the *Jacob blessing the Sons of Joseph*, and the Hermitage the *Denial of St. Peter*, both of this time, as is the *Pilate washing his Hands*, all of which are painted with power. Berlin has the brown and gold *Preaching of John the Baptist.*

Of his etchings was an *Abraham entertaining the Angels*; and several of the etched portraits were of this year—*Abraham Fransz*, the dealer, and a good friend to Rembrandt; the fine *Jan Lutma*, sculptor and goldsmith; *Young Haaring*, and the very fine *Old Haaring*, an officer of the Bankruptcy Court. This painting and etching of the officials of the Bankruptcy Court has its grim significance. In spite of dogged efforts to retrieve his fortunes, ruin stared him in the face—his case was hopeless. The questionable effort to save Titus his heritage had made the creditors of Rembrandt very bitter. He could not stem the tide of ill-fortune. Rembrandt was declared bankrupt, and the 25th and 26th of the July of 1656 saw the inventory being made of his house by the bailiffs of the Court. He dwelt in his home in the grip of the law.

The lad Titus, on 20th October 1657, made his will, proving his affection for his father from whose guardian-

ship the law had taken him the year before. He realised his father's inability to manage his own affairs, and seeing that Rembrandt would benefit nothing if he left his heritage to him, since it would be pounced upon by his creditors, he left his all to Hendrickje and her girl, his half-sister Cornelia, Rembrandt to enjoy the income during his lifetime, Rembrandt not being allowed therewith to pay off any debts contracted before the date of the will.

WHEREIN SHALLOW RESPECTABILITY BROWBEATS A GIANT—NOT WITHOUT WIDE APPROVAL; AND THE LITTLE PEDANTS ARE CROWNED WITH THE BAYS

Harassed by debt, Rembrandt's art was almost wholly mute during 1657—*St. Francis praying* is the only etching of this year. Buckingham Palace has his painting of the *Adoration of the Magi.* The portraits are the Rutland *Young Man* in an armchair; the National Gallery *Rabbi*; the Devonshire *Old Man meditating*; the Kann so-called *Rabbi*, and the Wallace *Titus*; the Bridgewater and Dresden and Cassel portraits of *Rembrandt* are of about this time. Something of the old swagger has left him—the old strut as warrior and the rest of it—here perhaps we have him in his workaday apparel, on which 'tis said he wiped his brushes as he painted; but he has not done with his self-respect yet; he is to appear in fine array to splendid purpose again.

As the year drew to a close, Haaring was ordered by the Court of Bankruptcy to sell Rembrandt's goods and chattels. His beloved home was to know him no more. On the fourth of the December he stepped out of the house that he had made famous, and betook him to the sign of the *Imperial Crown* to find his new and narrower home in the room of an inn—a beautiful old place, where he saw his treasures put up for sale at public auction on Christmas Day and for some five days thereafter; but, bidders being coy, the bulk was kept back for close upon a year, being sold in the September of 1658. He was to see the treasures

of years sold for the paltry sum of five thousand florins; and the house itself for another eleven thousand florins odd.

Rembrandt was a ruined man.

At fifty-five he was without a home, and utterly penniless; he saw all that had made his home dear to him being sold at an inn; he had to leave that inn unable to pay his frugal way, unable even to pay for his short stay therein. And it was bitter winter.

Rembrandt set to work to find some place where he could exercise his art, and drifted of course to a cheaper part of the town, fretted by the loss of all his engravings and properties. And though he had lost all for himself, he was striving to save what could be saved for Titus, whose guardian was fighting the Bankruptcy Court with dogged courage for Titus's share in the sales before the payment of creditors. Crayers, the guardian, proved himself a stubborn and good friend to Titus and Rembrandt, and after years of litigation, as we shall see, he was to secure the disgorging of some of the money at least from the creditors.

Unfortunately the time was not a happy one for the sale of works of art, and least of all for Rembrandt's works. Van Dyck was all the fashion. The Dutch achievement was out of the vogue; and Rembrandt and Ruysdael, Adriaen van der Velde and Pieter de Hooch wrought their genius now neglected amidst the new and polished style of elaborate finish. Academism was triumphant; and grace and prettiness walked in Amsterdam.

But Rembrandt, robbed of all his treasures, was not the man to surrender in penury what he had gruffly refused to surrender even at his highest prosperity; his flittings to makeshift studios saw him compelling his genius to even greater flights in the realm that he knew full well no other

could tread. And in his lonely wayfaring in the arts Poetry came to him with all her intensity, and he knew the emotional achievement of a deep understanding.

That year that he and Hendrickje with Titus and the little Cornelia searched and found the bare place that was to mean studio for Rembrandt, he set his canvases on his easel and painted masterpieces. His search into the emotional interpretation of life becomes more profound than ever.

WHEREIN SHALLOW RESPECTABILITY BROWBEATS A GIANT—NOT WITHOUT WIDE APPROVAL; AND THE LITTLE PEDANTS ARE CROWNED WITH THE BAYS

Once at work again, Rembrandt seems to have been happy in spite of all his cares.

The Scottish National Gallery portrait of *Hendrickje Stoffels in bed* is of this time—between 1658 and 1660, about the period of Sir Francis Cook's *Old Man seated, with a Stick.*

Rembrandt had made one of his great etched portraits in 1656 of *Old Haaring*, the member of the Bankruptcy Court, and two years thereafter, in 1658, he painted the so-called *Frans Bruyningh*, the secretary to that Court—it is sometimes given to 1652—marked by Rembrandt's wizardry of looming suggestion so that the head seems to move in the strong chiaroscuro; and in his employment of the mysteries the artist achieved a masterpiece such as his hand's skill again realised in the wonderfully painted head in brown and golden chiaroscuro that is the fortunate possession of the Louvre, called *A Young Man Unknown* (1658), that is clearly Titus grown to youth.

Rembrandt painted one of his rare mythological works in this year, the *Jupiter and Mercury received by Philemon and Baucis*, now in the Yerkes Collection at Chicago, in which the old couple, discovering the godhood of their guests, fall down in awed worship, Rembrandt being stirred by the human drama.

THE GREAT DUTCH-MEN

Rembrandt's great Ilchester portrait of *Himself*, now in the Frick Collection in America, of this year of 1658, is a masterpiece. He stands in a fancy dress, a stick in his hand, revealed in a glowing and luminous atmosphere with the air of the great genius that he was, serene amidst the din, painting himself at the moment of his supreme power. The Ashburton *Rembrandt* is also of this time, as are the Belvedere *Rembrandt* and the Uffizi *Rembrandt*, and of about this year the Ellesmere and the Wallace *Rembrandts*.

The portrait of a *Girl* in the Hoe Collection at New York is of this year, a strong effect of light and dark very typical of Rembrandt; which we see him employing to astounding purpose in his fine painting in the Kann Collection of *An Old Woman cutting her Nails*, in which the suggestion of the intentness and life of the thing is created with marvellous power.

The Ashburton portrait of *Coppenol* and the Wimborne *St. Paul* are of about this time. Rembrandt etched the *Large Coppenol* in 1658 from the painting; besides his etchings of *Jesus and the Samaritan Woman of* 1658, the *Allegorical Piece* in which the destruction of Alva's statue at Antwerp is supposed to be suggested, the *Woman sitting before a Dutch Oven*, the *Woman dressing after Bathing*, the *Woman with her Feet in the Water*, and the *Nude Negress Reposing*—all the nudes supposed to be Hendrickje.

The year of 1659 gave us the two coarsely handled Berlin paintings of *Moses breaking the Tables of the Laws* and *Jacob wrestling with the Angel*. A *David playing the Harp before Saul* is of about this time, or the next year. Lord Feversham's *Portrait of a Merchant*, the National Gallery *Old Man in a Fur Robe* with a red cap, the Pitti *Old Man Seated*, the Kann *Study of a Head*, the Althorp portrait of a *Youth*, sometimes called "William III," the

X

REMBRANDT

1606 – 1669

DUTCH SCHOOL OF AMSTERDAM

"REMBRANDT IN OLD AGE"

(National Gallery)

Painted about 1659. In oil on canvas. 2 ft. 9 in. h. × 2 ft. 3½ in. w. (0·839 × 0·698).

Belvedere *Young Man Singing*, and the *Admiral* (so-called) in the Schaus Collection at New York, are all the vigorous work of this year, marked by consummate mastery of chiaroscuro that yields a sense of moving, breathing life.

WHEREIN SHALLOW RESPECTABILITY BROWBEATS A GIANT—NOT WITHOUT WIDE APPROVAL; AND THE LITTLE PEDANTS ARE CROWNED WITH THE BAYS

The Davidoff *Christ* was painted probably about 1660, in which year Rembrandt painted three portraits of monks —the Strogonoff *Young Monk*, the Wemyss reading *Monk* with a fair beard, and the National Gallery *Capuchin* which has been challenged. The Duke of Buccleuch possesses a fine painting of an *Old Lady* (1660). The Hermitage has a *Titus* of this year; and the Louvre a famous *Rembrandt* with his mahlstick, a white cap on his head—the Rembrandt in misfortune, but the superb master still, sheltered and protected now from all worldly cares by Hendrickje and Titus, and free to create his art without hindrance. In the mid-December of 1660 Hendrickje and Titus signed deeds to make Rembrandt's future safe, and to ensure him peace in which to work. Poor Rembrandt's earnings were at the mercy of his creditors, and the faithful Hendrickje and Titus set themselves up as dealers in order to rid him of the greed of his old creditors, Rembrandt to give his whole services to them in return for home and living. The creditors jibbed in vain. The etchings kept the little home together, for collectors were busy now with "states" and all the elaborate business of "collecting Rembrandt," concerned more with rarity than with art.

The result was that 1661 saw Rembrandt produce a vast amount of work. He began the year by moving into a new house on the Rozengracht. Here he painted the *Circumcision*, now at Althorp; the Louvre *St. Matthew and the Angel*, in which same gallery is the *Venus and Cupid*, in which Rembrandt painted Hendrickje and the little Cornelia; and Hendrickje again appears in the Berlin

THE GREAT DUTCH-MEN

Young Woman at the Window. Stockholm has a portion of the large mutilated *Midnight Banquet of Claudius Civilis, at which he persuaded the Batavians to throw off the Roman Yoke*, which Rembrandt painted for the Town Hall, only to have the huge affair rejected. The *Praying Pilgrim*; the Iveagh *Young Man*; the Wimborne *Man in a Pointed Hat*; the Hermitage *Man with a Red Beard*; the Ashburton *Man in a broad-brimmed Hat*, or so-called "Jansenius," though the date may be a forgery for an earlier work; and the so-called *Rembrandt's Cook* (probably because he has a knife in his hand); the Neeld portrait of *Rembrandt*, and the Kinnaird *Rembrandt*, are all of this year.

This year also Rembrandt painted a great work for the Guild of Drapers, known as the *Syndics of the Cloth Hall*, at the Ryksmuseum in Amsterdam—a powerful and dignified work that set the coping-stone on the Dutch achievement in the painting of civic groups. With calculated skill his art utters the honour and dignity of the great merchants of Holland whereby they came to be the ideal of noble and pure industry throughout the ends of the world. That the splendour and power of this masterpiece was appreciated in his day is as little likely as that it would be appreciated if painted to-day. But Rembrandt cared nothing for outside judgment. As he laid the last brushful of paint upon that canvas, he at least knew the magic that he had wrought.

And he was content enough. He was happy in his home. His neighbours respected that home. They looked upon the busy, quiet Hendrickje as "Rembrandt's wife"; and Hendrickje's care and love for Titus and Cornelia carried the conviction that they were both her children. Etchings of Hendrickje no longer now appeared in collections as "Rembrandt's Concubine"; and he gave forth in this year of 1661 the etching of Hendrickje nude as the *Woman*

with the Arrow. Indeed, a legal document of the police-courts concerning a drunken brawl to which Hendrickje was witness on the 27th of the October of 1661, writes her down as the "lawful wife of Rembrandt the painter," which she signed with a cross, and Titus witnessed and confirmed. But the loyal Hendrickje's days were numbered. She had, a couple of months before, made her will, in which all her deep solicitude for the little household gleams out in its noble dignity. She had evidently had some sharp warning that the end was not far off. It may be that she lived a year or two beyond, but she died to the bitter grief of the stricken Rembrandt and his household. Hendrickje stands out through the years as one of the most fragrant names in the studios of the arts, compelling our respect by her sanity and winning our affection by the simple nobility of her soul, and the graciousness of her winsome womanhood. Criticism and art-cant sing the exaggerated praise of that shallow, smiling woman called *La Joconde*, whose perished surface, like its overrated splendour, conceals a vile and sordid femininity; but in that same Louvre hangs the splendid achievement of a far greater work of art, the portrait that the loving hand of Rembrandt wrought of the beautiful features which God gave to the sweet-souled girl, who had not the learning to sign her own name, but whose features live for us to keep immortal the outward semblance of the fragrant soul of *Hendrickje Stoffels.* She lives in Rembrandt's masterpiece, one of the lovable women of all time; and it was fit and right that the greatest master who ever limned the character and soul of the human should have wrought her immortality. In her presence the stilted and posed Madonnas of Italy shrink back into a convention, and Hendrickje, though she was all unwitting of it, stands forth as the purest and cleanest-souled Madonna of them all.

WHEREIN SHALLOW RESPECTABILITY BROWBEATS A GIANT—NOT WITHOUT WIDE APPROVAL; AND THE LITTLE PEDANTS ARE CROWNED WITH THE BAYS

The tradition that Rembrandt was in Hull in this year dies hard. His works in Amsterdam disprove it.

Rembrandt's happiness was soon ended; sorrows fell thick upon him with Hendrickje's death. The desolate home was gloomy enough. Rembrandt's health now began to give way, and his precious sight to fail him. His portraits show unwieldy fatness, making his body's action heavy to him, and his bloodshot eyes strain to fulfil the once miraculous vision—that vision to which the deepest shadows had yielded their mysteries and resonant suggestion, to which the golden light had uttered its most exquisite music.

After 1661 his hand's skill is stilled awhile. His last etching was done; his last landscape.

He was to wield his brush again in broadly painted, large-sized figures; when he painted again a complete change came over his style. The palette-knife is now employed in bold fashion. The bold and forceful touch has to be focussed at a distance. The *Death of Lucretia*, "painted with gold," shows him again at his easel in 1664. The Wallace *Workers in the Vineyard* follows; then the Amsterdam *The Jewish Bride*, or "Boaz and Ruth," of 1665, the year in which Titus at last came into some of his heritage, disgorged from Rembrandt's creditors by the faithful advocate Crayers; whereon Rembrandt, to strengthen Titus's position, had him declared legally to have reached his majority a year before the proper age. Titus's long-awaited heritage came in the nick of time.

And to Rembrandt now came a pupil, his last, AERT DE GELDER, to cheer the ageing master with his enthusiasm and worship. And the poet Jeremias de Decker's friendship for the master added to his last pleasures. He painted the Hermitage portrait of *De Decker* in 1666, the year of the

XI

REMBRANDT

1606 - 1669

DUTCH SCHOOL OF AMSTERDAM

"OLD LADY WITH THE HANDKERCHIEF, IN BLACK WIDOW'S CAP AND WHITE RUFFLE"

(National Gallery)

Painted about 1661. In oil on canvas. 4 ft. $2\frac{3}{4}$ in. h. × 3 ft. 2 in. w. (1·289 × 0·965).

poet's death. The National Gallery portrait of a *Young Woman* is dated 1666, and the Morrison portrait of a *Young Girl* is of this time, the so-called "Rembrandt's Daughter," though Cornelia was but eleven or so. The Warwick *Standard-Bearer* (the Northbrook *Old Man leaning on a Stick*, signed and dated 1667, is challenged), the Devonshire *Old Man*, and the Dresden *Old Man* are of about this time, as well as the Kann pair of portraits of a *Man* and his *Wife*, who are very like the husband and wife in the large Brunswick *Family Group*, a fine example of the vigorous art of Rembrandt's last years, in which clean, smooth painting, that shows the canvas below, is side by side with the powerful loaded impasto, creating the astounding force of his last phase.

WHEREIN SHALLOW RESPECTABILITY BROWBEATS A GIANT—NOT WITHOUT WIDE APPROVAL; AND THE LITTLE PEDANTS ARE CROWNED WITH THE BAYS

The Darmstadt *Flagellation* shows Rembrandt's art in 1668. The *Return of the Prodigal* is of 1668-1669, and in it Rembrandt paints with a fierce energy that utters with power the pathos of the theme. The Louvre has two portraits of *Titus* painted in 1667 or 1668.

Thenceforth Rembrandt, as far as is known to us, painted only the lonely *Rembrandt*—in the Uffizi *Rembrandt Old* and the Vienna *Rembrandt Old* he reveals with that unflinching truth of the poetic vision that was his mighty birthright the Rembrandt broken by misfortune and sorrows into an old man at sixty-two—faded, wilted, worn out, a withered giant, yet serene in his majesty of achievement; and if the last portrait he painted, the Carstanjen *Rembrandt Old* at Berlin, shows him an old man at sixty-two, it reveals his hand's skill unbaulked by age, the forthright and subtle fingers impelled by the splendid audacity of surety, unerring in its master-stroke, raising out of the darkness the living masterpiece of human character. The unbroken soul ranges free; the eye looks upon us with keen scrutiny; the

magnificent inquisitiveness, that had probed the emotions of life, wholly unconquered. The mouth has lost its teeth, but the lips are moved by laughter.

For Titus is gone a-marrying, and Rembrandt has increased his beloved by one—Titus married his cousin Magdalena van Uylenborch. Besides, Rembrandt has his girl Cornelia to watch over his home still. And if he has passed out of living memory, what cares he? even though gossip be already busy sending him to Stockholm as Painter in Ordinary to the king there, whilst others have seen him in Hull or Yarmouth—even dying thereat! No one now will buy his masterpieces even by the groat—they refused his portraits for sixpence!

But sorrow could not even let the old man die with laughter in his eyes; death stalked into his home mercilessly. Titus died in the year of his marriage, being buried on the 4th of September 1668; his young wife became a mother in the March of 1669, and the small daughter was called Titia. But Rembrandt had suffered as much as he could bear. In the death-register of the Wester Kirk where Titus lay buried some official fellow wrote in grim official prose on the second Tuesday of October, it being the eighth of the month, in 1669—"Rembrandt van Ryn, painter, on the Roozegraft, opposite the Doolhof. Leaves two children." Of personal belongings he left nothing but some linen and woollen garments and his painting materials. They buried him in the Wester Kirk; but when they dug up his grave a while ago his half-open coffin was found wholly empty. So vanished into cloud the greatest painter of his age, unhymned by poet or poetaster, wholly forgotten. Forty years after he was laid in his grave, 'tis true, the egregious Lairesse, with academic pomp, vowed the master's art an affair of "rottenness," of vulgarity, and found it prosaic, even

though its "vigour and sincerity saves it from utter worthlessness"! Other asses brayed. But let us be just to the self-sufficient Lairesse—he admitted that *even he himself had inclined to* such mastery, but had rid himself of the splendour, and put it from him! . . . Who was Lairesse? Echo cries back "Who, indeed?" even though he abjured "rottenness" and "vulgarity," and eke the "prosaic," and was even himself inclined at one time to such mastery but put it from him!

WHEREIN SHALLOW RESPECTABILITY BROWBEATS A GIANT—NOT WITHOUT WIDE APPROVAL; AND THE LITTLE PEDANTS ARE CROWNED WITH THE BAYS

It is usual to apologise for the neglect that fell upon Rembrandt's art by some such cant as that the average man could not understand it. I doubt it. The fact was that the narrow cliques that usurp authority in art in all countries and at all times know nothing about art—and are dazzled even by academic things, which is to say, dead things. But Rembrandt was a supreme genius, caring nothing for such things—he was concerned only with the utterance of the emotions that life set athrob in his being; and he poured forth his poetic art solely that he might create his impressions. Many who praise him today praise him because he is dead, and ignore the living art of living geniuses for the same reason that Rembrandt's own people ignored him—because their eyes cannot see or their wills understand. To argue about the business is a sorry boggling. The man who can stand before a Rembrandt and not be touched in his sensing by the deep and resonant utterance of it is blind to his art—it has not been granted to him to sense the splendour and the wonder of it. He who tries to find Beauty in Rembrandt's intention condemns himself; he who chatters of Beauty in it is simply foolish. "When I would give my wits a rest," said he, "I do not look to honours but to freedom." He

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fought, like the great rebel he always was, for leave to utter himself—and, by the irony of academism, he too was to be made a whip to lash and a clog to shackle the free spirits of the coming years. Men talk with ridiculous exaggeration of his poorest scratches on the copper, ungifted to realise that others can and have employed line and the graving tool to as consummate and eloquent purpose. Rembrandt never made any mistake about the aim of art—he knew that it was to utter the emotional significance of life, and with astounding skill he taught his hand to gather out of the gloom of pulsing shadows the emotional thing, and to make it leap out from the haunting mysteries of darkness. Every mood he expressed with a craftsmanship fitting to it—he had no hard-baked formula—the delicate mood he painted delicately, the vigorous mood vigorously. He was an artist. For law and studio-jargon he cared no snap of the fingers. For the purist's hesitations and dandified laws he had utter contempt—he wiped or half-wiped his etchings just in whatsoever way he pleased, so that he won the mood desired. His achievement was as wide as it was prodigious. Six hundred paintings by him are known; more than a thousand drawings; etchings innumerable. But it is in his creative power, in his profound vision, his resonant utterance, his deep spiritual insight, his dramatic sense, and his eloquent gifts of creating the sense of life, that he steps forth a giant of stature far above the height of Raphael—one of the supreme painters of all time. As a painter he ranks with Velazquez and Frans Hals, but as an artist he is above them both. He employs a vaster gamut of the emotions; his orchestration is a mightier world-music. In impressiveness, in dignity, in depth of insight, in individual essence, he is stupendous. All that he touched he glorified. He is of the supreme voice of the Teutonic genius; in paint-

ing a part of its purest utterance—he and English Turner. He was born out of the womb of the Gothic genius—his art gives forth the mighty reverberations as of an anthem that peals amidst the great haunting shadows of a vast cathedral. He brushed aside all petty aims and narrow laws that he might create the emotions of grandeur; but he is not concerned with vague other-worlds, his feet are firm planted on mother earth, even when his head is set amidst the winds of the swinging firmament. He sought the godhood that is in man—the dignity that is in the miracle of life in whomsoever it shines, even if the light be set in the roughest lamp. His is no make-believe mysticism, but the mystery of living. He knew that the miracle of life was as profound in the peasant's hut as in the gorgeous palaces of princes; that the withered frame of the old folk had experienced the wonder as profoundly as the jigging blood of youth. He steps forth the giant of the Tenebrosi—they who in their might, standing with one foot in the past and one in the future, gave forth a new revelation to the age, of which he was to be the supreme utterer. Light revealed to him her mysteries. And to each work he essayed, like the true artist that he was, he brought an artistry that suited the mood and fitted it.

WHEREIN SHALLOW RESPECTABILITY BROWBEATS A GIANT—NOT WITHOUT WIDE APPROVAL; AND THE LITTLE PEDANTS ARE CROWNED WITH THE BAYS

Through Rembrandt, the art of painting leaped forward in seven-league boots and reached to heights before never dreamed of. Other Dutchmen gave us facets of life; Rembrandt is universal—a world genius. He sounds the speech of Democracy. Others painted the outer man; Rembrandt painted the outer man lit by the soul. With his vision of the hauntingness of great shadows, he painted so that the human we gaze upon comes to life, and moves and breathes and feels, looming into our senses with rhythmic essence. He broke the table of the laws of the

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pedants, shelved the schoolmistresses, and set the petty agape by uttering into our senses that life is not all beauty, is as often ugly; but, whether black or fair to look upon, is a wonder and a miracle. He knew suffering; and, knowing it, he was unafraid to tell us that tragedy is as sublime as comedy. Dandified fools, self-conceited and pedantic, turned the people's eyes away from their giant even whilst he lived—flung their fatuous laws of grace and prettiness and the like Italian twaddle at him, as a Cockney might spit at the Sphinx; but he, like the splendour he was, went serenely his own way, and stands thereby a mighty beacon-light to the ages. The very Bible, his chief literary inspiration, he rid of the fantastic and pagan beauties of Renaissance Italy, and uttered its soul and spirit in the emotions of the common people. He went back to the Christ, and rid Him of the gloss of the Churches. He rid the Old Book of the untruth of Raphael, and felt the significance of its deep sympathy with life, so that he brought the love and charity and infinite pity of the Nazarene into the cottage of the peasant. He translated into the speech of the people the utterance of the Supreme Democrat. The Italian was separated from the Christ by a splendid imperial building that he called the Church; the Dutchman with regret pulled down that building and essayed to step, with simple courage, naked and unashamed, into the Presence. And Rembrandt was very-Dutch. The Italian put on all his bravery of ceremonial before he dared approach the altar of his faith; the Dutchman opened the door of the holy of holies, and knelt before his God unaware of the ridiculous breeches he wore, for his eyes were keen set upon the realities; forms he tore to tatters. The Italian genius had approached the mysteries with calculated step and in approved order, as though arrayed in

canonicals, and allowed to peep through a chink in the veil by guardian priests. Rembrandt walked up to the veil in the mystic twilight, put out his hand and swept it aside, fearlessly, a very visionary, content only with that which his own eyes should see. Pedants fret their brains to prove him a thinker—deeply religious, or deeply atheistic, or the like. He was no thinker. He was an artist—he concerned himself with *feelings*. He went to the Bible for subjects, because the Book gave him the widest, deepest, and most human emotions. It revealed life to him. The whole gamut of pity, of mercy, of grandeur, of charity, of the moods of the people, were there for the turning of the page. Pedantry has said of Rembrandt that in him "the thinker and poet surpass the painter"; no man who can sense the art of Rembrandt could so blunder, for art has nothing to do with thinking; whilst a painter, if an artist, is a poet. We see the beauty-mongers pour forth such fatuities as that "ugly shapes, commonplace motives, are raised by his chiaroscuros into a higher sphere" (whatever this bosh may mean), "and transformed into glorious works of art"—all unwitting of the fact that, had Rembrandt so lied, he had been a sorry artist! Equally baffled by their fatuous law about Art being Nature, they try to explain away the fact that his lighting and shade, whilst not true to Nature, are very wonderful! quite ignorant of the fact that Rembrandt was an artist, that his province was to *suggest* the moods, the emotions, aroused in the presence of Nature. A superb daughtsman, his line follows the forms of things with an intense, nervous, and eloquent exquisiteness that makes the line of Raphael or Mantegna into cast-iron rigidity; his modelling of forms by light and shade makes the mastery of Leonardo da Vinci look trivial. Of colour, as pure colour, he had not the sense of Titian,

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or Veronese, or Giorgione, nor the subtlety of Velazquez, but he could win from his limited employment of colour such deep resonances as not even these could yield with all their wide gamut.

Catholic in his artistic tastes, he admired widely different schools and collected them; but his own vision he never baulked with the spectacles of the admired ones. His admiration for Brouwer is used as a certificate for Brouwer's worth by critics who forget to add that he admired also the art of Ribera, of Bassano, of Michelangelo, of Dürer, of Jordaens, of Titian, of Guido Reni, of the Carcacci, and the rest. They laugh at his ideas of Oriental attire; but the laugh is with Rembrandt—for he was an artist, not an antiquarian—he was concerned, as Shakespeare was concerned, not with pedantries and accuracies, but with the high aim of creating the atmosphere of an *impression of Orientalism*, and photography was not in him. He wrought with wondrous skill of light and shade a spiritual significance which places him amongst the supreme poets of all time. He aimed at no less, he cared to do no less, and he achieved no less.

And this was the supreme art of which Ruskin could write that "it was the aim of Rembrandt to paint the foulest things he could see—by rush-light"!

Yet this was the man who chiefly created modern art! His influence on the British genius was stupendous. The Dutch had become free, in Church and State; their art democratic, keenly interested in the human, uttering the new revelation of man. Across the river the Flemish remained aristocratic and sacerdotal—the Flemish genius fell back, the Dutch advanced; and all that is vital in art to-day in France and England and Holland was born out of it. Rembrandt was lord of it all.

CHAPTER VII

OF THEM THAT LEARNT THE MYSTERIES IN REMBRANDT'S STUDIO

THE PUPILS OF REMBRANDT

THE dignity of Rembrandt was based upon such heights that the individual genius he so suffered to perfect in himself, he, with as keen intensity, sought to bring to birth and blossom and flower in his pupils. He divided his workshop into cells that each pupil might find himself and develop his own personal utterance; and his virile leadership brought forth wondrous achievement in the painting of the home-life and the landscape of the people. GERARD DOU and NICHOLAS MAAS were pupils; whilst VERMEER OF DELFT, DE HOOCH, METSU, the two OSTADES, and TER BORCH were subject to him.

GERARD DOU
1613 – 1675

Gerard Dou was born at Leyden on the 7th of the April of 1613, and this son of a glazier early revealed his gifts. He came, a lad of fifteen, as first pupil into Rembrandt's studio, when the young Rembrandt was living in his father's house a youth of twenty-one; and all that is best in Dou is due to his youthful master's teaching.

In three years the young fellow was an accomplished artist; and on Rembrandt's leaving for Amsterdam, Dou was painting on his own account. He had learned from Rembrandt in this Leyden home of Rembrandt's father to

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paint himself for subject; and his first essays in art were portraiture, in which he himself often appears. But his minute art took its natural path towards small pictures of the life of the small trader and peasant, which was fast becoming the vogue—and Dou from the beginning had a keen eye for the saleable thing. The saleable thing was the small picture of the home life, wrought with minute smoothness. Dou came to great tact in exactly suiting the vogue.

In Rembrandt's home the youth, but seven years younger than his master, was received like a son, and painted often his master's father and mother and the family.

Free of 'prenticeship, Dou early came into repute, and was prominent in Leyden by 1644, and took part in founding the Guild of Painters there. Dou ran towards minute finish; but he was to do it often with that largeness of aim and clarity of lighting that were his heritage from Rembrandt—those three years of 'prenticeship were not lost upon him. But he fell away to fashion, and created a Dutch school of smooth finish. This art was given to the middle-class Dutch home, with the Dutchman and his wife surrounded by their everyday treasures and living their everyday life, not wholly rid of a sense of emptiness and chill respectability and demure ease. But the drama of life does not enter to thrill us in Dou's work as in that of the great masters of his day.

Whether it be that he wrought with exquisite care to meet a demand, rather than out of the keenly sensed observation of things, he does not grip. Yet he varied his subjects; he had a fondness for night scenes of interiors lit by candle or lantern; he preferred very few figures—he felt his lack of composition. He could handle light and

shade, if without the musical resonances that lie therein; and his colour is often glowing. He had the firm hand, even if it moved mechanically firm at times. But withal his paint is richly laid down; though he has the photographer's eye—the severity of a lens, rather than the poet's art to create the mood by colour. By consequence he knew an astounding vogue, and his was just the art to be subject to the retainer of a thousand florins a year from President van Spiring of The Hague for the first call upon his paintings. Dou's industry created a considerable achievement; though the world's admiration of his spending "three more days" upon the painting of a broomstick already finished, to deceive the eye, proves a slow output. If he lack the fire and inspiration of the poet, he at least had the infinite capacity to take pains.

OF THEM THAT LEARNT THE MYSTERIES IN REMBRANDT'S STUDIO

The Louvre, Amsterdam, Munich, Dresden, and the Hermitage are rich in him. The Wardour Castle *Blind Tobit going to meet his Son* in subject and handling prove his debt to his young master. And his bright luminous portraits of himself, such as the well-lit *Self Portrait* with a pipe in the National Gallery, are of his brilliant achievement. The small Bridgewater *Self Portrait* shows him at twenty-two, founded on his master, even to the shadow cast on his face by his cap.

It was early charged against Rembrandt that he could not paint light; and the fashion was coming in for the light graceful art of the Flemings. Dou always went towards the vogue.

The Louvre has his *Old Woman reading the Bible to her Husband*, the *Cook pouring out Milk*, the *Greengrocer's Shop*, and the *Woman Sick of the Dropsy* (1663), which shows his later silvery harmonies, painted at fifty, and accounted his masterpiece by the elect. The National Gallery has *The*

THE GREAT DUTCH-MEN

Poulterer's Shop, remarkable for its still-life; the so-called *Painter's Wife*, though Dou died a bachelor; the portrait of the so-called *Anna Maria van Schurman* is challenged as not being by him. Amsterdam possesses *The Evening School*, his masterpiece in the treatment of candle-light; and his famous portrait of *The Burgomaster of Leyden and his Wife*. The Hague has the *Woman at an Open Window*. In Munich hangs a large picture, for one of his minute, small, and careful art, the *Quack Doctor* of 1652. Dulwich has his *Lady playing on the Virginal*; the Wallace his *Hermit* and *Hermit at Prayer*.

Dou learnt from his master to sign his work. His art was wondrous in its imitation of Nature. He died at Leyden in 1675, the most fortunate of all Rembrandt's pupils.

The art of Gerard Dou had considerable influence. In his studio were trained his greatest pupil GABRIEL METSU; his favourite pupil FRANS VAN MIERIS; CORNELISZ VAN SLINGELANDT (1640-1691); GODFRIED SCHALCKEN, and Dou's nephew DOMINICUS VAN TOL (1631-1676), whose works are sometimes mistaken for those of Dou; with a group of imitators such as BARTHOLOMEUS MATON, MATHIJS NAIVEU or NEVEU, GERRIT MAES, KAREL DE MOOR, QUIRINGH BREKELENKAM, JOHAN ADRIAEN VAN STAVEREN.

B O L

1617 – 1680

FERDINAND BOL, born at Dordrecht in the June of 1617 —at least baptized there in 1617—came to Amsterdam in childhood. At sixteen he went to Rembrandt as 'prentice, his first 'prentice at Amsterdam, and is said to have served him for eight years or so. He was free of his master in 1642, for the Berlin *Old Lady* by him is dated that year.

XII

GERARD DOU

1613 – 1675

DUTCH SCHOOL

"THE DROPSICAL WOMAN"

(La Femme Hydropique)

(LOUVRE)

Signed on the edge of the book placed on the reading-desk in the left foreground: "1663. G. DOV. OVT. 65 JAER." Painted in oil on panel. 2 ft. 8¾ in. × 2 ft. 2½ in. (0·83 × 0·67).

He was the best of the early Amsterdam pupils both as etcher and painter. Dresden has his *Flight into Egypt*, which shows him a master in 1644; and the Copenhagen *Tomb of Christ* of the same year proves his grip of grandeur and light and shade strongly influenced by Rembrandt. Indeed, so close is he to his master that many of his paintings and etchings long passed as being by Rembrandt, whose signature has been much forced upon Bol's plates as well as upon his paintings, as in the two Munich portraits, supposed to be *Govaert Flinck and his Wife*, and the two Ashburton portraits. The National Gallery has his so-called *Astronomer* dated 1652.

OF THEM THAT LEARNT THE MYSTERIES IN REMBRANDT'S STUDIO

Later, Bol developed a lighter and more popular style which brought him into wide fashion, princes and merchants sitting to him. He decorated the Town Hall of Amsterdam, and in the Burgomasters' Gallery are portraits by him of various Regents of societies, such as the *Regents of the Huiszittenhuis* of 1657. He was to be in high favour when neglect came to Rembrandt, and he lived to see his master utterly forsaken, whilst poets sang the glory of Bol. He died in the July of 1680 a rich man, "the favourite alike of Nature and of Fortune."

BAKKER
1608 – 1651

Between 1632 and 1634 there came to Rembrandt's studio JACOB BAKKER (or BACKER), GOVAERT FLINCK, and JAN VICTORS. Bakker, born at Harlingen, at first worked in Rembrandt's manner, as in the Brunswick portraits of *Himself and his Wife*, but fell away into other fashions. His chief works are the *Syndics*, the large *Archery Pieces* at Amsterdam, the Brunswick *Sleeping Nymphs*, and the three Dresden *Portraits*.

A HISTORY

THE GREAT DUTCH-MEN

GOVAERT FLINCK
1615 – 1660

Govaert Flinck, born at Cleves on the 25th of the January of 1615, had violent prejudice to overcome in his family to his passionate desire to become an artist, which was only borne down when they discovered that an eloquent preacher, who greatly stirred them at Cleves, followed the ungodly calling of artist, LAMBERT JACOBSZ OF LEEUWARDEN, to whom he was forthwith apprenticed, becoming fellow-pupil to Bakker. From Jacobsz's studio, Flinck followed Bakker to Amsterdam where he entered Rembrandt's studio for a year, lodging with Rembrandt's friend and kinsman Hendrick van Uylenborch. He must have left Rembrandt in 1636, for his Brunswick portrait of *A Young Girl* is dated that year. This and his *Young Officer* at the Hermitage (1637), and his *Girl as a Shepherdess* (1641) at the Louvre show his indebtedness to his master, to say nothing of the Louvre *Angel appearing to the Shepherds*, and his Amsterdam *Jacob's Blessing*.

Later, Flinck came under the fascination of Rubens and Van Dyck, and changed his brilliant colour with delicate shadows and interest in light and darkness to a bright, translucent, gay style, which set him into the vogue whilst his mighty master sank out of the public favour. He became the fashionable painter of his time, and the praise of poets, who compare him with Rembrandt to Rembrandt's disparagement. To him were given important works to paint in the Town Hall at Amsterdam and in the Huis ten Bosch (House in the Wood) hard by the Hague.

To 1642 belongs his *Regents* at Antwerp, showing him

at twenty-seven under the spell of Rembrandt. He and Van der Helst were the favourite painters of the big civic groups; and the Elector of Brandenburg gave him many orders—for whom he painted the Berlin *Expulsion of Hagar*.

OF THEM THAT LEARNT THE MYSTERIES IN REMBRANDT'S STUDIO

He not only made a fortune, but his marriage with a daughter of a Director of the East India Company at Rotterdam increased it. The great studio he built for himself in Rotterdam was the resort of the cultured, and Prince Maurice often visited him there. His masterpieces are the Amsterdam groups of *Captain Bas with his Company* (1645), and the *Banquet in Honour of the Peace of Westphalia* (1648), which hint that he had looked upon the art of Van Dyck and of Velazquez. Govaert Flinck died at Amsterdam in 1660.

EECKHOUT

1621 – 1674

Gerbrandt van den Eeckhout, born at Amsterdam to a goldsmith, ran to versifying as well as painting. He became a pupil to Rembrandt, to whose teaching, unlike Bol and Flinck, he remains faithful. He signed a painting of *Jacob blessing his Children* in 1641. Frankfort has a good portrait of a *Savant* by him. But he came to chief achievement in small works, of strong chiaroscuro. Amsterdam has his *Woman taken in Adultery*. The large historical painting, as in his Hermitage *Darius and his Family* (1662), and the Brunswick *Sophonisba* (1664), betray his weaknesses. He died soon after his master, to whom he was ever an affectionate friend, as he was also the friend of Rembrandt's faithful and loyal ally, the landscape-painter ROGHMAN.

PHILIPS KONINCK

1619 – 1688

PHILIP DE KONINGH or Philips Koninck, born at Amsterdam in 1619, became pupil to Rembrandt, and won to chief repute as a landscape-painter, though he also painted portraits and a *Venus Asleep*, hymned by the poetasters. Leaving Rembrandt in 1646, he painted fine landscapes which have more than once been given to Rembrandt, as in his fine *Storm*, which was even engraved as by Rembrandt. He was remarkable for his painting of vast grey clouds rolling over the low lands, with the sea on the horizon. The National Gallery has one of his rare works, a *Landscape*.

CAREL FABRITIUS

1624 – 1654

Rembrandt's pupil Fabritius promised to reach great heights, but he was dowered with ill-luck, which was not content with killing him in the explosion of the Delft powder-magazine, on the 12th of the October of 1654, as he sat painting, but dogged him with fire by burning his masterpiece of the *Van der Vin Family Group*. The Rotterdam *Study of a Head*, long given to Rembrandt, reveals his gifts. Perhaps Madame Lacroix's famous *Study of a Goldfinch chained to a Feeding-box* is the best known of all his works. Schwerin possesses his *Sentinel*.

BERNARD FABRITIUS who painted the Brunswick *St. Peter in the House of Cornelius*, and the Halbich so-called *Baptism of St. John*, was probably Carel's brother. He was working from 1656 to 1672, living most of the time at Leyden. Amsterdam has his supposed portrait of *Willem van der Helm, with Wife and Child*.

Carel Fabritius it was who trained one of Holland's

greatest artists—Vermeer of Delft, and greatly influenced De Hooch.

VAN DE CAPELLE

1624? – 1680

This great sea-painter we shall meet again later on.

VAN HOOGSTRAATEN

1627 – 1678

SAMUEL VAN HOOGSTRAATEN, born at Dordrecht on the 2nd of August 1627, became pupil to Rembrandt for ten years in 1640; on leaving in 1650 he travelled to Vienna (1651), London (1663), and Rome; thence went to The Hague in 1668, and thereafter settled at Dordrecht as Director of the Mint. But he is to be remembered rather for the *Introduction to Painting* that he wrote for a large band of pupils, than for his art, which wandered into every subject, as his feet had wandered over many lands. This book clearly puts into print what had fallen from his deeply reverenced master; and in it we may read much of Rembrandt's instruction, such as "You will find in your own country so many beauties that your life will be too short for their understanding and utterance. Italy, with all her loveliness, will be useless to you if you cannot express the Nature that surrounds you." Hoogstraaten died at Dordrecht in 1678. He had entered into religion and joined the Mennonites in 1648, but was expelled ten years afterwards for marrying without leave and for wearing a sword. He essayed the subjects that De Hooch made famous, as well as seascapes, architectural subjects, animals, fruit, and flowers. Amsterdam has his portrait of *Matheus van der Bouche* (1670), and the *Sick Girl*; Vienna has his *Man looking out of a Window* (1653); and the Hampton

Court *Face at a Window*, long called the *Jester of Henry VIII* and given to Holbein, is now believed to be by Hoogstraaten.

AERT DE GELDER
1645 – 1727

The last of Rembrandt's pupils, he who came to cheer the last lonely years of the master by his worship, was AERT or AART DE GELDER, born at Dordrecht on the 26th of October 1645, a young fellow of good family, who came to Rembrandt's studio from that of Hoogstraaten. He closely followed Rembrandt's style with brush and palette-knife; and even hung his studio with weapons and embroideries in Rembrandt's fashion. His *Synagogue* of 1671 is closely akin to Rembrandt in handling and chiaroscuro. The Frankfort *Painter painting the Portrait of a Lady* is his masterpiece (1685). Dresden has his *Ecce Homo* of 1671 and the *Contract.* Prague has his *Vertumnus and Pomona*, engraved by Lépicié as being by Rembrandt, and his *Ruth and Boaz*, which is so close to Rembrandt's *Jewish Bride* that it establishes the real name of Rembrandt's picture and its intention. It is easy to understand Aert de Gelder's work having been fastened on to Rembrandt. The so-called *Le Pecq Rembrandt*—an "Abraham entertaining the Angels"—with Rembrandt's signature and the date 1656, is one of these.

Of lesser pupils were J. DE WET, painter of the Brunswick *Christ in the Temple* (1635); WILLEM DE POORTER of Harlem, or W. D. P.; JAN VICTORS, or FICTOOR, born at Amsterdam in 1620, who signs his Hermitage *Continence of Scipio* and the Louvre *Young Girl at a Window* in 1640; and the Haarlem portrait of *Burgomaster J. Appelman* (1661) and the Amsterdam *Pork Butcher* (1648) show his pupillage; the National Gallery

OF THEM THAT LEARNT THE MYSTERIES IN REMBRANDT'S STUDIO

has his *Village Cobbler*; but there is little of the master's good in his large Amsterdam paintings of *Joseph interpreting the Dreams* (1648), nor in his *Dentist* (1654), nor in the three bilious Brunswick works—*Esther and Haman* (1642), *David and Solomon* (1653), and *Samson Captured by the Philistines*. Victors was a gentle, compassionate soul, and took several voyages on the sea nursing the sick, and dying in India in 1670. Another pupil, LEENDERT CORNELISZ VAN BEYEREN, was with Rembrandt in 1637; he was born at Amsterdam in 1622 to a rich timber-merchant, and was to die early, in 1649, the only certain work by him being the Buda-Pesth *Ecce Homo*. D. D. SANDVOORD painted a *Regent Group of Four Ladies* at Amsterdam (1638)—the Louvre has a sacred picture by him. JURIAN OVENS (1620–after 1675) painted night-pieces and came to repute in portraiture—Amsterdam has a group of *Regents* by him, seven men at a table; and Haarlem a *Dutch Family* (1650). G. HORST is to be seen in a couple of works in Berlin. PIETER VEREELST (1614–after 1668) is represented at Berlin by a Rembrandtesque *Old Woman* (1648), whilst his paintings of the life of the people of the taverns were modelled upon the art of Adrian Ostade. DROST (1638-1690) imitated Rembrandt in Biblical subjects. WILLEM DE POORTER, working 1630-1645, was pupil to Rembrandt. HENDRICK HEERSCHOP of Haarlem (1627–after 1661), 'prenticed to a painter there in 1642, entered the guild in 1648; he painted the portrait of a *Negro* at Berlin. JAN JORIS VAN VLIET, born at Delft in 1610, became an etcher, as we have seen, who engraved much work after Rembrandt. JACOB LEVEQUE (1624-1674), ADRIAN VERDOEL (1620-1681), and HEYMAN DULLAERT (1636-1684). The German CHRISTOPH PAUDISS (1618?-1666) was pupil and imitator of Rembrandt.

A HISTORY

FOLLOWERS OF REMBRANDT

JAN LIVENS

1607–after 1672

JAN LIVENS or LIEVENS, born at Leyden in 1607, therefore about the age of Rembrandt and of the same town, was, with Rembrandt, pupil to Peter Lastman. We have seen him working with Rembrandt in those early years at Leyden; and they remained affectionate friends when their ways parted. On the break-up of the little group at Leyden, Livens went to the English Court in 1630, and during his three years thereat he painted all the royal family. He thence went to Antwerp, entering the guild in 1635. Twenty-one years later, in 1661, he entered the guild of the Hague. Painting religious subjects in the homely Dutch fashion, he later passed from his Rembrandtesque style to a Van Dyck manner. Berlin has an *Isaac blessing Jacob* long given to him, but challenged as being by Horst. The Louvre has his *Visitation*. He was a good etcher in Rembrandt's manner.

NICOLAS MOEYAERT came to Amsterdam in 1624, joining the guild in 1630, and soon surrendered his Elsheimer discipleship to that of Rembrandt. He trained a pupil, SALOMON KONINCK, who must not be confused with Philips Koninck.

LEONARD BRAMER, born at Delft in 1596, wandered to France and Italy in 1614, joining the colony of Dutch at Rome under Elsheimer. Returning to Delft, he painted much for Prince Maurice, founding the guild thereat, the hall of which he frescoed, as he also in 1655 frescoed the Doelen hall. He loved to paint candle-light in Honthorst's manner; and he had Lastman's joy in Oriental costumes.

In his later work he fell under the glamour of Rembrandt, and painted several religious subjects.

OF THEM THAT LEARNT THE MYSTERIES IN REMBRANDT'S STUDIO

SALOMON KONINCK

1609 – 1668

Of the many who owed inspiration to Rembrandt—but he was not, as is often held, his pupil—was SALOMON KONINCK, who completely fell under Rembrandt's influence. Pupil to Colyns, then to Lastman's brother-in-law, Frans Venant, then to Claes Moeyaert, his *Praying Hermits* and *Contemplative Philosophers* prove that his real master was Rembrandt's art, which he frankly copied at times, as in his several *Rabbis*. His work has often been given to Rembrandt. The Bridgewater Gallery has a *Young Man Reading* by him (1630); Rotterdam his *Goldweigher* (1654); and Berlin his *Calling of St. Matthew*, besides one of those fine *Rabbis* so often given to Rembrandt. His etchings are also founded on Rembrandt.

THE GREAT DUTCH PAINTERS OF THE HOME LIFE UNDER REMBRANDT

1650

CHAPTER VIII

WHEREIN WE SIT OUT THE COMEDY OF DUTCH LIFE WITH JAN STEEN

WHEREIN WE SIT OUT THE COMEDY OF DUTCH LIFE WITH JAN STEEN

We now come to an art typically Dutch, the painting of small scenes from the Home Life of the People—high and low. These require small explanation—they are clear to the meanest intelligence, except perhaps the so-called *Guard-Rooms* that were so often painted, particularly at the beginning of an artist's career. It must be remembered that Flanders was held by Spanish soldiery, who lived a riotous life, contemptuous of their Flemish subjects. The soldiery frequented certain houses which from their lack of tavern-like appearance baffle the mind, since there are often women in decent array, sometimes richly dressed, to be seen in these large, simply, but often handsomely decorated rooms. They were the houses frequented by the dandies and the soldiery in which they met frail women of the town, and where drinking was indulged in without recourse to the ruder taverns where the men-at-arms brawled. In the Dutch paintings these dandified, handsomely dressed men seem almost as staid in their drinking as the quietly conducted women-folk who sit or stand in quiet converse with them. They are known as Guard-Rooms, but their appearance does not convey the soldierly meaning of the word that we have to-day; indeed, they were rather places for officers and men about

town to meet the women of the town and to escape from the demure life that Puritanism thrust upon the ordinary citizen.

We have already seen BROUWER painting with grim humour the life of the peasant class, and ADRIAEN VAN OSTADE following him; though Ostade really belongs to the group under Rembrandt, since he came under Rembrandt's influence, and his achievement is of the time of these men whom we are about to consider; just as his brother Isack van Ostade's "inhabited landscapes" are the out-of-doors life of the people which we shall consider later in relation to landscape, remembering that the two phases were being created alongside of each other.

Before turning to the Home Life of the well-to-do initiated by Ter Borch, of which Vermeer of Delft was the supreme genius, it were best to complete our survey of the painters of the Home Life of the people, and round off the art of Brouwer and Adriaen van Ostade with that of Jan Steen.

JAN STEEN

1626 – 1679

Whilst the youth Rembrandt wrought his early art at Leyden in his twentieth year, there was born in that same town in 1626 to a brewer, called Havick Steen, of an old patrician family of Leyden, a child whom they christened JAN. Sent as a boy to the drawing-school of JACOB DE WET at Haarlem, his eyes looked upon the living art of Frans Hals, which left a deep impression on his whole career. The tavern-life of Hals, as likely as not, set the Bohemian note to Steen's life; but the art of the Haarlem giant was in every man's mouth, and it revealed to the young Steen the humour of his art, the laughter of children,

XIII

JAN STEEN
1626? – 1679

DUTCH SCHOOL

"BAD COMPANY"
(La Mauvaise compagnie)
(LOUVRE)

Signed in full in the left bottom corner. Painted in oil on panel. 1 ft. 6¾ in. × 1 ft. 2¼ in. (0·47 × 0·36).

the quick, deft statement of the impression. ISACK VAN OSTADE also influenced the young fellow.

WHEREIN WE SIT OUT THE COMEDY OF DUTCH LIFE WITH JAN STEEN

Returning to Leyden, young Jan Steen was 'prenticed to NICOLAS KNUPFER of that town, and is said to have gone therefrom to the landscape-painter, VAN GOYEN, whose daughter Margrit he married about 1651. At Leyden he came under the influence of Gerard Dou, Metsu, and Frans van Mieris.

The young fellow was to know a hard life, which he took, however, in rollicking fashion, if all the gossips speak true—but there is obvious slander in much that they said. He was compelled for his bread-winning in later life to turn tavern-lord; and being mine host of an inn, and painting with Dutch intimacy the jovial life of the tavern, gossip would naturally vow that he was his own best customer—his death is even set down to the bottle. But it would have been utterly impossible for Jan Steen to have painted the prodigious number of finely wrought paintings which are certainly from his hand, had he been the drunken sot who, as slander swears to it, only painted when driven by want.

Houbraken seems to have got the groundwork of his gossip from Steen's friend, the painter CAREL DE MOOR, but to have garnished it with funny stories founded upon and created out of Steen's pictures which he plastered on to the repute of the artist—a somewhat alarming method of writing the life of a creator of art!

Steen seems to have come to repute early, for he was eager in the establishing of a painters' guild in his town, and was a member at its creation in 1648. At Leyden he lived his twenties, from 1648 to 1658.

About Steen there grew up rollicking stories of his humour and habits, founded on his paintings; and, pro-

bably, had he painted Judas Iscariot he would have been given Judas's character. That he lived a sober example to Puritans in steeple-hats is unlikely; but he lived one long struggle against want; and the astonishing fact about him is that he produced so large an amount of ill-paid work. Dogged by creditors who seized his goods, he wrought his art at beggarly fee to keep his family in what decency he could. When he lay down and died at fifty-three, he had created between five hundred and a thousand pictures—work which represents the "indolence" of some thirty years.

Let us look at the facts, rid of tittle-tattle. Steen's father, the merchant Havick Steen, was of patrician stock; he was a brewer, and brewing was kept jealously amongst a few great houses of the land as a patrician privilege. Houbraken's scandal about Steen having to marry Margrit van Goyen in a hurry turns out to have been true about another daughter of Van Goyen, who certainly had to marry the painter CLAEUW in haste to save her good name.

Steen's early works are the Dessau *St. John Preaching* of about 1650; the *Fetching the Bride* of 1653, in the Six collection at Amsterdam; the Frankfort *Market at Leyden*; the Rothschild *The Fair* at Berlin; the Kappel *Rommelpot Players* at Berlin; the *Young Lady at a Toilet Table*, his wife Margrit, of 1654; and his earlier family feasts, such as the *Twelfth Night*, the *Feast of St. Nicholas* (held on the 3rd of September, when the good child is rewarded, and the naughty one punished), and the *Festival of the Bean King*, in all of which are Steen and his genial wife Margrit, and parents and children—the Sedelmeyer *Feast* is of 1653, and in the Hague *Feast* of 1658 the eldest child is about seven, and the younger children have arrived. He painted

his *Portrait of Himself*, now at Amsterdam, his only life-sized work in portraiture, about 1652, in his thirty-fifth year.

WHEREIN WE SIT OUT THE COMEDY OF DUTCH LIFE WITH JAN STEEN

In 1658 Jan Steen went with his young family to open a brewery in Delft, which turned out a sorry venture that landed him in disaster, on which he turned his back in 1661 to go to Haarlem, where, in the same year, he entered the Painters' Guild. At Haarlem he became the friend of Adriaen van Ostade; and during the 'sixties—which he spent at Haarlem—his art was influenced by Ostade in some of its moods, 'tis said towards the peasant life—which is as it may be. Margrit and his children constantly take part in his comedy of life. Happy in spite of many troubles, Steen knew a happy home, of which his jovial wife was the soul of gaiety.

And his keenly-seen art, whether pathetic or satirical or joyous or humorous his mood, is always the home life of the people, from highest to lowest. He painted the Bible subject, mythology, and history, 'tis true, but only as an excuse for the Dutch Home Life. Except his life-size *Portrait of Himself* at Amsterdam, his only portraits are pictures of the home life. His landscape is as fine as his astounding still-life that, with Dutch delight, he loved to set in his paintings. And to his design he brought a wide inventive power, skill in composition, and a consummate taste far above academic laws. Whether few or many, his figures live and move; and they group themselves in a right fashion above all law. His grip of pose was limitless.

Steen took his figures from his family. He painted his beloved Margrit again and again. He realised the kinship of all the arts; and his achievement is a large book of drama. If he pointed a moral he drove that

moral fearlessly home, careless of the pedant and the prig, like the great artist he was.

In 1668 Steen painted Margrit in the famous Cassel *Twelfth Night*, genial and jolly, gazing at her youngest son, who stands upon a bench emptying his glass. Steen is now growing stout. Margrit was to be queen of his comedies but little longer; for, as the 'sixties at Haarlem ran out, Steen was to know his deepest sorrow—death came into his home in 1669, and broke into his cheery circle by taking his amiable wife. The February of 1670 saw an apothecary put the bailiffs into the plagued man's house and seize his goods and sell his pictures for a debt of ten florins—probably due for poor Margrit's physic.

Steen returned forthwith to Leyden to begin life over again in his mid-forties. Here Frans van Mieris became an intimate friend. In 1672 the desolate man was granted a licence to open a tavern, and in the spring of the following year of 1673 he married the widow of a bookseller, Maria van Egmont. It seems to have been a happy marriage in spite of constant want, until death came to the happy, genial satirist and painter of the life of his day in the February of 1679 to free him from duns for ever. England possesses most of his works as a precious heritage of the honour we paid him.

When Steen stepped into that field of the wide acreage of his art in which particular artists came to their limited supremacy, he wrought that art so skilfully that he is easily mistaken for them; but he had a bright, vivacious touch, a richness of colouring, and a vivid vision that set him apart from them all. The Buckingham Palace *Girl at her Toilet*, the Kann *Margrit Steen at her Levée*, the National Gallery *Music Master*, and the like, are akin to the art of Metsu or Mieris; the Neumann and the Lowther

WHEREIN WE SIT OUT THE COMEDY OF DUTCH LIFE WITH JAN STEEN

Castle *Jan Steen at the Oyster Lunch* touch De Hooch's ground; the peasant subjects trench on Adriaen van Ostade's realism, and out of doors he touches shoulders with Isack van Ostade. He works upon the acreage of Vermeer and of Maas. He challenges the still-life of Gerard Dou, of Kalf, of Claeuw. But he takes these in his stride, as part of the Dutch comedy of life. Jan Steen has always been a favourite with the public; it is clear that he touches the emotions of the ordinary man. He has suffered much fatuous praise and as fatuous dispraise. To set him next Rembrandt in the Dutch genius, as did Waagen and Burger and Bredius, is fantastic. But it is at least not so fatuous as the estimate of a far more scholarly critic than any of these; for, even whilst Bode twits this inartistic judgment, he himself utters a judgment which proves his lack of artistic sensing and of the pedantries that have stifled that sensing. To blame Jan Steen as "too much, often even primarily, a poet," is surely the most fatuous verdict ever delivered in ink. The word "poet" is vaguely used to define the "artist" when he utters his art in verse. But poet and artist are absolutely one and the same thing. The arts are one and indivisible—it is the craftsmanship alone, the instrument alone, that differs. To speak of the significance, that is to say the Art, of an artist as his "weakness," and to imply that the *lack* of art, in other words, of Poetry, is his claim to artistry, reduces the judgments of the critic and the scholar to utter claptrap. Nor may any man's art be judged by the price it fetches.

A man of unequal achievement, in art or poetry reaching often to a power that sets him beside Ter Borch and De Hooch and Metsu, therefore the peer of those when at his best, Jan Steen varies much in his gifts. No man has been more widely forged and copied. But even

in his own pictures he at times is slovenly in draughtsmanship as a primitive, and as dissipated and raucous in colour —harmonious as an outworn barrel-organ. Bode condemns him for his occasional "disagreeable motives"; but the artist has a right to any motive he desires, so that he create it with power; but when he proceeds to say that we cannot find their counterpart among Dutch painters he surely forgets Brouwer and others! And what motive could be more "disagreeable" than the foul martyrdoms that figure throughout so much of art under the glamour of "religion"?

It may be that when he forgathered at the tavern with his friends—Mieris and Lievens and De Vois and De Moor and the rest—Jan Steen reached the bottom of many a long glass; but this scarce proves him a sot. The tavern, indeed, gave him over a hundred fine subjects from Dutch life which he wrought into masterpieces. But the life of the tavern was only a part of his wide achievement. No Dutchman had a wider invention. None painted so wide a gamut of the life of the whole people from patrician to peasant. In 1671, the year before he became a tavern-lord, he wrought the exquisite painting of patrician life, known as the *Music Master*, in the National Gallery, in which he employs with rare skill the resonant chiaroscuro that Rembrandt revealed to his race. He covers the whole ground of which Vermeer of Delft, De Hooch, Metsu, Ter Borch, and Brouwer wrought in supreme fashion each but his little acreage. He ranges wider and freer than them all. Bode denies him "the high demands on his art of a Ter Borch or Vermeer," but, like most scholars, Bode mistakes craft for art—it was exactly in his *art* that he made far higher demands, in his craft that he did not. His range is prodigious. He gives us a complete utterance

WHEREIN WE SIT OUT THE COMEDY OF DUTCH LIFE WITH JAN STEEN

of the Dutch life of his day that no other artist approaches. With an art that changes to fit each mood and impression, therefore baffling the pedants who like to see sameness in every painting by one man, he recorded the whole day of Holland of great and small. His keen eyes saw, and his skill of hand gave utterance to, the life of man from the cradle to the grave. He set himself no single string to twang on the harp of life. Joy and sorrow, in the homes of the high and the low, he set forth with that dramatic faculty that had such a grip upon character; and he had consummate dramatic vision that saw at once the artistic moment. With Steen we dance and drink and smoke and play bowls with the peasant; we go to the trader's wedding or walk the fair with him; we frequent the tavern or give the tipsy reveller an arm to his vague lodging; we humorously serenade some sleeping girl or have our fortunes told; we stroll through the farmyard, and with the farmer's little girl we feed the hens; the baker, the artisan, the student, the poulterer, the fishmonger, the milkman, the ole-clo' man, the notary, the schoolmaster, the clerk, the alchemist, the surgeon, the physician, the lover and his lass, they all live again in Steen's art. We enter the home with him, and we know the sitting-room, the kitchen, the store-room, the dining-room as we know the tavern, as though we had lived his day more than a couple of hundred years ago. The public feast, the house of ill-fame, the concert, the cockfight, the sickroom, the dance, from the demure music of the drawing-room to the rollicking orgies of the street song, we know them all, knowing Jan Steen. This idle sot has found time to make a world for us that is immortal. Steen looked upon it all with keen, humorous, inquisitive eyes; and from the tender love passages to the coarser lusts of man, from

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the sipping of wine in handsome homes to the drunken debauch and loud quarrel, he uttered these things with astounding skill in close upon a thousand paintings that are the marvellous record of a life of no great length. Who knew the heart of a child better than big-hearted, laughing Jan Steen? In the nursery, at meals, at play, folding its small hands in *The Grace*, how the man rouses the mood we feel in the presence of these exquisite things!

Like all the great artists of all time he pours forth his art careless of occasional rudenesses and roughnesses—he left the pettinesses of style to the second-rates.

His portrait of himself, painted in his mid-thirties in those happy-go-lucky early days at Leyden, shows the keenly watchful small eyes, the grimly humorous eyebrows and full nose of the satirist; the full, sensual lips of the well-curved mouth more than hint at jollity, and reveal the open and free-handed nature of the life-loving, frank, genuine man, with shrewd wisdom behind it all. The easy-going life with the genial Margrit must have been a jovial business after all; and the keen observer that lurks in his eyes found a lifework in the superb creation of a comedy of life which, if it led him to dire want during many of his years, at least fulfilled his wide-ranging genius.

CHAPTER IX

WHEREIN THE SON OF A TAX-GATHERER TURNS PAINTER OF THE ARISTOCRACY

TER BORCH
1617 – 1681

WHEREIN THE SON OF A TAX-GATHERER TURNS PAINTER OF THE ARISTOCRACY

REMBRANDT was but a boy of eleven when there was born to a painter of Zwolle in Overyssel, in 1617, a son whom he christened GERARD TER BORCH (or Terborch, or Ter Borch, or Terburg, as you will), to whom, as the lad grew up, his father taught the mysteries of drawing and painting in so far as he himself had picked them up during his travels in Italy.

TER BORCH THE ELDER'S works have been given to Gerard Ter Borch's youth, until modern research separated them. Ter Borch had, besides, an accomplished sister, GESINA TER BORCH, who became a fine painter, and her works also were flung into the heap of Ter Borch's achievement as the years rolled by. To this difficult problem of unravelment Dr. Bode brought all his scholarly skill, and rid the art of Ter Borch from much confusion. Then, recently, was found a family album, now at Amsterdam, which has cleared up the vague gossip of Ter Borch's career.

TER BORCH THE ELDER, born at Zwolle in 1584, had to win his bread by combining his painting with an almost hereditary calling of tax-gatherer. He seems to have travelled considerably in Germany, France, and Italy, but of his master we have no hint. At Zwolle he married Anna Lancelots Byfkens who came from Antwerp; and

who bore to him at the end of 1617 his first child, who was to come to fame as Gerard Ter Borch and make the name immortal. Out of this lower middle-class home was to come the Dutch painter of the aristocracy—an affectionate, well-disciplined home, in which the travelled tax-gatherer carried out the ideal of a good education, of which he had realised the value.

The engravings and drawings in the old family album prove Ter Borch the Elder to have been an artist of the rank and mannerist style of Lastman and Bloemaert and Moeyaert, and, like them, well-fitted to train genius. His fond eyes early beheld the promise of his boy Gerard; he set into the album a work by the child at eight, and he trained him as far as his powers would permit, making him early go to Nature. So, as a mere boy, Gerard Ter Borch was sketching in the street and market-place, and in the winter on the ice, the life he saw before him. Here the lad shows that he has seen the art of Avercamp, who lived at Kampen, a couple of miles away. At fifteen the wise father decided to send him to Amsterdam, whither the youth went in 1632, to one of the "Society Painters," whether to DUYSTER or KICK or PIETER CODDE is uncertain; but he was early painting *Officers on the Ice* and the doings of the fashionable in cool, delicate colour. His two years at Amsterdam saw the youth rapidly leave all these Society Painters behind. The Ionides picture by Ter Borch at South Kensington is dated 1638, four years after he left Amsterdam, but is of the type of his art in youth; Bremen has one of his *Guard-Rooms*, the kind of subject so much in the fashion. In 1634, his seventeenth year, Gerard Ter Borch went to Haarlem as pupil to PIETER MOLYN—this Peter Molyn the Elder, born in London, had settled in Haarlem in 1616—but he was now so

WHEREIN THE SON OF A TAX-GATHERER TURNS PAINTER OF THE ARISTOCRACY

accomplished in his art that Molyn painted pictures in collaboration with him. Ter Borch's art was now profoundly influenced by Frans Hals. Berlin has *The Consultation* painted by him in 1635, in silvery key—in the spring of which year the youth of seventeen entered the Haarlem Guild. He was scarce entered into the Guild before he started upon his journeyings abroad; early July saw him in England, where Van Dyck was lord of art, and Ter Borch's borrowing fingers at once took much from him, and perhaps stiffened his artistic intention towards the aristocratic concept of the figure and somewhat artificial atmosphere. From England he is said to have wandered to France, Spain, Germany; at any rate, six years thereafter he was at Rome, where, in 1641, he painted the two portraits of *Jan Six* and a *Lady* on copper, now in the Six Collection at Amsterdam. By 1644 he was clearly back in Holland again, for he painted in that year his three small busts of *H. van der Schalcke* and his *Wife* and little *Daughter* at Amsterdam.

Ter Borch returned to Amsterdam on the edge of thirty; he had been living there some time when he painted his portrait of *Caspar Barlaeus* in 1645. This son of Anna Byfkens had gone on his travels subject to the whimsically named Duyster and Kick and Codde and Pot; at Haarlem, Hals came to inspire him—he returned an accomplished and travelled man, the tax-gatherer gone out of his blood; Van Dyck had revealed the romance of aristocracy to him, and his sojourn amongst the masters had enlarged his vision, his quick borrowing vision had looked upon the art of Velazquez and Titian. A mighty borrower like Raphael, he like Raphael had also a personal vision. And he now brought all his brilliant gifts to the painting of the aristocratic class of his great race. He had learnt the distinction and the stately pose of what we

term breeding—Velazquez and Van Dyck had shown him the way.

The year 1646 saw the great gathering at Münster where Europe was in congress; and to Münster he went, and found wide employment as portrait-painter of the great there assembled; the National Gallery has his picture of the signing of the treaty in 1648, Ter Borch's thirty-first year. The Peace of Münster in Westphalia, sealed on the 15th day of May 1648, was the recognition by Spain of the independence of the United Provinces after eighty years of war. The Peace of Westphalia followed in the October. This somewhat photographic work by Ter Borch is rather of historical than of high artistic significance. The Louvre has a sketch of another gathering at Munich painted in 1646. He was now clearly moving amongst the very great. It was at Münster that the Spanish Ambassador met him and persuaded him to Spain to paint Philip IV for a handsome fee. However, he was back in Amsterdam in 1648. His portraiture, so far, is distinctly miniature in aim.

To his thirties probably belong his *Boy and Dog* at Munich, and works of this type. His delight in military life he kept to the end, and his guard-room motives he repeated again and again. But these ladies are frail in but demure fashion—for they and the officers are portraits of his sister, the accomplished Gesina, who was his pupil; and the officers are painted from his brother Moses, and other members of his family—his other sister Katharina, his brother Herman, and the like. And he painted them all with an aristocratic air in his favourite interior—a large room, spacious and open and severely decorated, portraying a dandified leisured life—all is serene, and orderly, and elegant; and a certain grandeur results.

XIV

TER BORCH

1617 - 1681

DUTCH SCHOOL

"HELENE VAN DER SCHALKE"

(AMSTERDAM)

WHEREIN THE SON OF A TAX-GATHERER TURNS PAINTER OF THE ARISTOCRACY

On coming back to Holland, he seems to have been struck by the grandeur and breadth of Rembrandt's art, and the deep resonance that lay in his marvellous chiaroscuro. And Rembrandt was living hard by in this same Amsterdam. Buckingham Palace has an exquisite and resonant work, *The Letter*, that testifies to this.

On the 14th of the February of 1654, Ter Borch married Geertruida Matthysen at Deventer, of which town he became a citizen a few months later.

Employing exquisite draughtsmanship and gifted with as exquisite colour-sense, Ter Borch caught the subtle atmosphere of high breeding. His restraint and consummate judgment in selection enhanced this atmosphere and impression. His rich colour-faculty made him choose costly textures in raiment, and his painting of the glitter of satin is famous. He hit a happy mean between smoothness and evidence of brushing, so that his touch remains a mystery. The Cassel *Lady playing upon a Lute* is a superb example of this—and the figure of this same girl in a white dress in this, as I think, his masterpiece, appears again in the *Lesson upon the Guitar* at the National Gallery, likewise in the Berlin *Concert*. His portraits, strangely enough, are extraordinarily simple in colour, "almost colourless," as Dr. Bode puts it. The small full-lengths which he preferred in empty surroundings are typical of the school of Pot and Kick from whom he had learned his art, but the black dress of Velazquez's grandees and his silvery-grey schemes had not been lost upon him. The National Gallery has a *Portrait of a Gentleman*.

In 1666 Ter Borch was elected to the Common Council of Deventer; he was now at the height of his fame; the following year he painted the *Regents'* picture at Deventer, in which he portrays the magistracy.

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It is amusing to find the critic and the professor solemnly trying to explain away the anecdotal intention of many of the Dutch painters. They even try to deny the artist his emotional intention, the whole aim of his art, in order to prove that he was not trying to utter anything. Goethe is sneered at for his "novelistic interpretation" of the famous *The Paternal Admonition*; but, as a matter of fact, the artist is as justified in uttering the story of the life about him as the story of the Bible. Art may use anecdote or reject it. Its sole concern is that it shall completely utter the impression it desires to create in us—that it shall not require explanation or outside aid. Even Dr. Bode is so guilty of the lack of artistic significance of a work of art as to speak of "charm" as an essential of the art of the greatest masters; and to add to the falsity by mistaking the "poetical or musical mood" aroused in the spectator as being beyond the limits of art—the very qualities that *make* it a work of art! As if tragedy demanded "charm"!

In 1672 Ter Borch painted *Prince William of Orange*, afterwards King William III of England, the first of three portraits of him. He kept his clear vision and skill of hand to the day that death took him. *The Music Lesson*, in the Six Gallery, is of 1675.

Death came to Ter Borch in the early December of 1681 in his sixty-fourth year; and on the eighth day of the month his body was taken to Zwolle and there buried in the family vault in the church of St. Michael amidst ceremony. He died a childless man, one of the rare men of Dutch genius who did not fall to want and neglect—for he painted in the fashion. But his fine portrait of little *Helene van der Schalke* proves how keenly he saw the childhood in the quaint, fantastic, elfish, old-world array in which this wan child is hidden.

XV

TER BORCH

1617 – 1681

DUTCH SCHOOL

"PORTRAIT OF A GENTLEMAN"

(National Gallery)

Painted in oil on wood. 2 ft. 2 in. h. × 1 ft. 9 in. w. (0·661 × 0·534).

CHAPTER X

IN WHICH WE DISCOVER ONE OF REMBRANDT'S GREATEST PUPILS SEDUCED BY FASHION INTO MEDIOCRITY, AND PROSPERING THEREBY

NICOLAS MAAS
1632 - 1693

IN WHICH WE DISCOVER ONE OF REMBRANDT'S GREATEST PUPILS SEDUCED BY FASHION INTO MEDIOCRITY, AND PROSPERING THEREBY

NICOLAS MAAS, or MAES—your Dutch "ae" is broad "a" as in father—was born at Dordrecht in 1632, the same year as Vermeer at Delft.

Nicolas Maas was pupil to Rembrandt from 1650 to 1653; and this great artist, from his master, developed an art which was finely gifted to express the life of the people of which he became an exponent. His humour was tickled with the doings of servants; and his sense of the Dutch life drew him to the limning of the homely offices of the housewife. Seeing colour richly and strongly, he rendered it with power. He loved to paint the pots and pans of the kitchen—and his brush lingered lovingly over the roundnesses of a stone jar or earthen bowl. Handling paint with firm decision of touch, he had a rare sense of its employment.

Maas settled at Dordrecht in 1654; and of 1655 is a painting dated by him, wrought after a number of earlier works, life-size, which are very close to the art of his master. Amsterdam has, of these early pieces, the girl at the window, known as *The Reverie*, and the blind old woman at *Grace* who gives thanks after her slender meal. England possesses the National Gallery

The Young Card-players, the Galton *Nurse*, and the Rothschild *Children with a Goat-carriage*, all large, all painted in strong light and shade, warm in colour, and broadly and boldly handled. Several have long been given to Rembrandt, as are many of Maas's *Old Women*, as at Althorp, Buda-Pesth and Leipzig.

Maas soon took to smaller works; and during the decade from 1655 to 1665 he achieved his finest art.

The *Dutch Housewife* and the *Idle Servant* at the National Gallery are exquisite examples of this period, both painted in 1655, Maas's twenty-third year! The *Cradle* at the same gallery is of about this time. The Kann Collection has his superb canvas of a *Young Girl peeling an Apple.*

The Eavesdropper in the Six Collection at Amsterdam is dated 1657, of which are replicas at Buckingham Palace and Apsley House. It is in his exquisite home scenes that his chief triumphs are. His occasional essays in Bible themes are but home scenes. The Denbigh *Hagar's Farewell* is given to Rembrandt. Unfortunately his great decade was to see him come to an end of his fine period in this realm—the last dated of his all too few paintings of home-life known to us was wrought in 1667, and is a repetition. Maas was driven almost wholly to portraiture for bread; and the last twenty-five years of his life were to be given wholly to it.

And this man, with this astounding vigour, so completely turned a somersault in art that when in his later career he painted portraits, the style is so different that it is almost incredible that they were wrought by the same hand. He went into Flanders, and at Antwerp fell under the glamour of Rubens and Van Dyck. He was a changed man. And the world approved his new worship

XVI

NICOLAES MAAS

1632 - 1693

DUTCH SCHOOL

"THE IDLE SERVANT"

(National Gallery)

Signed and dated 1655, in the bottom right-hand corner. Painted in oil on wood. 2 ft. 3½ in. h. × 1 ft. 9¼ in. w. (0·698 × 0·54).

of elegance and grace; and the wealthy adored his trivialities.

So vast is the change in the art of Maas now become that the world has invented a second Nicolas Maas, and called him the "Brussels Maes," to account for him. But his sitters are the folk of Amsterdam.

Maas died at Amsterdam in 1693.

WHICH WE DISCOVER ONE OF REMBRANDT'S GREATEST PUPILS SEDUCED BY FASHION INTO MEDIOCRITY, AND PROSPERING THEREBY

CHAPTER XI

WHEREIN WE WATCH THE SHORT, SWIFT CAREER OF THE SECOND OF THE GREAT TRIO WHO PAINTED THE DUTCH ARISTOCRACY IN THEIR HOME-LIFE

TER BORCH, Metsu, and Vermeer of Delft painted the leisured classes of the Dutch with rare genius.

METSU
1630–1667

THE GREAT DUTCH PAINTERS OF THE HOME-LIFE UNDER REM-BRANDT

GABRIEL METSU was born at Leyden to a painter of Flanders who died in 1633, whilst the child was but three years old.

Pupil to Rembrandt's pupil, Gerard Dou, of Leyden, he rapidly developed towards a personal vision, for he shows little tribute to his master; he was eagerly trying to find his own utterance from early days. Indeed, Gabriel Metsu must have shown talent early, since we find him, a youth of sixteen or seventeen, leaguing with other painters in Leyden to set up a painters' guild in 1647, and becoming one of its foundation members the following year, whilst still uncertain as to the line which he was to take before discovering himself as the consummate painter of the home-life of the wealthy class. He wrought his art at Leyden until twenty-four, leaving for Amsterdam in 1655. His earliest dated work is the Louvre *Woman taken in Adultery*, of 1653, which gives a key to his development. It is clear that the late 'forties that saw him made a member of his guild at Leyden, saw him at work upon those

paintings of visitors to the houses of frail women known by the critics as brothel-pieces, which we have already seen in fashion amongst the Dutch painters of the life of the day, generally with carousing soldiers and dandies. The Hermitage and the Liechtenstein at Vienna have two such early works. Metsu at once shows lively comedy gifts and vigorous handling. Thence he went to Bible subjects, which rather points to these so-called brothel-pieces being intended as illustrations of the Prodigal Son—always a favourite subject with the Dutch. The Strassburg *Poor Lazarus*, of the early 'fifties, Metsu's early twenties, shows the artist increasing in power, though influenced by his older townsman Jan Steen. But in larger works from the Bible, painted in these years, such as the *Hagar's Farewell*, Metsu is not seen to advantage; and even in better works he is not at his supreme achievement, such as the Schwerin *The Widow's Mite*, the Louvre *Adulteress* of 1653, the so-called *Penitent Magdalene* at Vienna, the *Samson's Riddle*, or the Demidoff *Gold-Weighers* of 1654. These early years show Metsu under the influence of Rembrandt. He also came under the revelation of Frans Hals as revealed by the *Fish-Wife's Stall* at Lowther Castle, a large work boldly handled, and by the *Woman selling Game*, and the young couple seated drinking by a bed, in the Warneck Collection. To these early twenties of his manhood, eager impulsive years of his art, when his inquisitive vision was lively and tense, belong his paintings of *Forges*, with their strong light and shade. These broad, freely handled paintings of forges are to be seen at Stockholm, Amsterdam, and, best of all, in the Salting Collection in London.

WHEREIN WE WATCH THE SHORT, SWIFT CAREER OF THE SECOND OF THE GREAT TRIO WHO PAINTED THE DUTCH ARISTOCRACY IN THEIR HOME-LIFE

Metsu, now twenty-five, went to Amsterdam in 1655, the master of a rare art in painting small pictures of the

life of the day, as the Salting *Forge* of this year proclaims. He was finding himself in his art—discovering the path that was to lead him to his high achievement. The example of Rembrandt and of Maas and the painters he there found working, added greatly to his style. Henceforth he gave himself wholly to the presentment of the life of the wealthier class. The Perkins *Concert* of 1659 still reveals his Leyden manner and vision, the quick, almost rough handling, and the restlessness. Munich has the *Twelfth Night* marked by the same dashing touch ; and the Vienna *Lace-Maker*, the Beurnonville *Portrait of Himself*, the fine and luminous *Fish-Wife* in a Prague collection, are amongst the works of this time, the latter end of his twenties.

Metsu had been ranging in vision, ranging in colour-schemes from silvery light to the rich blacks of his Prague *Fish-Wife*. At thirty he found himself; and from 1660 he created the masterpiece. He did not at once desert the market-stalls, the tavern, the street and frail women. The finely wrought Dresden somewhat festive *Couple at Breakfast*, or so-called *Painter and his Wife*, is of 1661, as is the Karlsruhe picture of the like subject. To 1662 belong the two Dresden market-stalls, which he painted more than once in those years—the *Woman Poulterer* and the *Man Poulterer*. Munich has his *Feast of the King of Beans*. But his chief achievement was given to those impressions of the well-to-do folk of Amsterdam, serene, consummately arrayed, exquisitely wrought, and delicately painted, which seemed to call forth all the splendour of his colour-faculty. He reveals them a happy, contented people, home-loving and given to comfort, living in richly arrayed houses, and gathering handsome things about them.

Painting with feverish and restless activity, Metsu by

WHEREIN WE WATCH THE SHORT, SWIFT CAREER OF THE SECOND OF THE GREAT TRIO WHO PAINTED THE DUTCH ARISTOCRACY IN THEIR HOME-LIFE

his genius recorded the life of his day amongst the well-to-do Dutch in unforgettable fashion. He stands with Ter Borch and Vermeer of Delft and Frans van Mieris as the recorder of that life; but he is above all the recorder of the "cheerful happy life" of the cultured Dutch. We can reconstruct that life from his art alone. We move thereby amongst the prosperous Dutch—a richly attired girl, in the large open handsome rooms of the age, plays her mandoline, or reads or writes a letter, or is busy a-making lace with cunning fingers; we see a dandified fellow at the harpsichord, a girl playing to him; or he pours out wine for her; or a young mother lies abed, visited by friends; or the handsomely apparelled folk sit at meat: all is happiness. Now and again a sterner note is struck, where illness enters the home, as in the painting at Berlin or at the Hague, where a mother nurses her sick child. And he wrought this fine art with a rich and glowing sense of colour far removed from the simple, almost monotonous colour of his earlier work. At Amsterdam was Rembrandt, and Metsu looked upon Rembrandt's colour, and colour came to him. He discovered the gamut of resonance that is in colour-harmonies. He used warm dark backgrounds; he flooded the room in pale light; he wrought to no stilted prescription. The Beit *Letter-Writer* and *Letter-Reader* show him setting his figure in luminous pale light against a light wall, as though he had looked upon the magic of Vermeer. The National Gallery has his *Duet* and his *Music Lesson*; Buckingham Palace has the *'Celloist*, the *Lady with the Book of Music*, and the *Portrait of Himself*.

Metsu's years of greatness were to be but few; an early death lay in wait for his genial career. He was to be granted seven years or so of splendour before he died, yet

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those short years were to exhaust his art and to see it on the turn of decline when a clumsy operation brought his art to a sudden end in the October of 1667. He was buried at Amsterdam. His vision was losing its subtle sense of glowing light that made his figures live in luminous colour. He was already taking to painting by trick of thumb, and his art was growing empty and bald. All was not yet lost—he did not live long enough ; but emptiness was threatening. The dash and fire of the Berlin *Couple at Breakfast*, the splendour of the Pierpont Morgan *The Visit*, were vanished. Metsu was fallen to mimicry of Metsu. Metsu had shot his bolt before forty.

XVII

METSU
1630–1667

DUTCH SCHOOL

"THE MUSIC LESSON"

(National Gallery)

On the wall at the back hang two pictures: a "Twelfth Night Feast" by Metsu, in a gilt frame; and a "Landscape" by J. Ruisdael, in a black frame.

Signed "G. Metsu" at the top right-hand corner. Painted in oil on canvas. 1 ft. 3 in. h. × 1 ft. ½ in. w. (0·381 × 0·317).

CHAPTER XII

IN WHICH WE STRIVE AWHILE TO PIERCE THE MYSTERY OF THE SPHINX WHO WAS THE GREATEST OF ALL THE DUTCHMEN THAT PAINTED THE WELL-TO-DO IN THEIR HOME-LIFE

VERMEER OF DELFT

1632 – 1675

IN WHICH WE STRIVE AWHILE TO PIERCE THE MYSTERY OF THE SPHINX WHO WAS THE GREATEST OF ALL THE DUTCH-MEN THAT PAINTED THE WELL-TO-DO IN THEIR HOME-LIFE

In Jan van der Meer of Delft, or Vermeer of Delft, Holland was given one of the greatest of all her masters of painting. Born at Delft in 1632, he enters the guild thereat on the 29th of December 1653, having married Catherine Bolnes in the April of that year; his first dated painting is the Dresden *The Proposal* (or *Courtesan*) of 1656. 'Prentice to Rembrandt's pupil Carel Fabritius—him who painted the chained goldfinch with such exquisite brush—Vermeer's pupillage is said to have been brought to a sudden end by the death of his master in 1654; but, as a matter of fact, by 1654 Vermeer was established as a painter. He seems to have gone for a short while to Rembrandt; but he was married at twenty-one, which would presume a certain vogue for his art before he was twenty-one—however, to Rembrandt he certainly owed his revelation; but instead of concentrating his light, he flooded his chiaroscuro with it, bringing out with the revelation of the light as much as Rembrandt had been wont to keep in the hauntingness of his shadows. The musical employment of light and shade by Vermeer has no rival in the whole realm of art—his giving the dominant mass to the lights instead of the shadows, whilst it robbed

him of the intense dramatic power of Rembrandt, yielded him a wider gamut of colour as colour, and he stands out as one of the supreme colourists of all time. In sense of values he is the peer of Hals and Velazquez, and a greater colourist than either. His sense of light, his emotional employment of it, is serene and limpid; and he uttered its magic in all its wizardry, so that every object in the sedate rooms he loved to paint is bathed in its luminous glow. The light caresses every object, and Vermeer's brush lingers lovingly over the rendering of that universal caress. Pure daylight, cool and exquisite, was granted to his brush. His all too rare masterpieces will probably increase in numbers as the fashion for him and the keen research into his career increase. Vermeer was to suffer from lack of means in common with nearly all the great Dutch genius; and there is something pitifully pathetic in the prospect of this sunny giver of joyousness in his art living a life of daily struggle for livelihood.

It is likely enough that he created his art but slowly; for the elaborate care and broad finish reveal heavy work upon his masterpieces. And apart from this slowness of craftsmanship a large family was born to him; ten children grew up at his knee and gave him small chance of thrift. We find him having to raise a loan before he was a year married. Only thirty paintings by him are known; unfortunately at his death his widow had to pawn all his works that were left: one to her mother—the famous *Vermeer at Work in his Studio*, now in the Czernin at Vienna—and two to the baker, on condition that she should be allowed to buy them back again. The known thirty cover twenty years of his life. His most enthusiastic patron was the printer Dissius of Delft, who at his death in 1682 left nineteen pictures by Vermeer.

OF PAINTING

IN WHICH WE STRIVE AWHILE TO PIERCE THE MYSTERY OF THE SPHINX WHO WAS THE GREATEST OF ALL THE DUTCH-MEN THAT PAINTED THE WELL-TO-DO IN THEIR HOME-LIFE

Vermeer lived a regular, serene life, fretted only by lack of money; his repute was very high amongst his fellows, and he became president of the guild at Delft.

Of his early pictures are the Cotes *Christ with Mary and Martha* at Glasgow, amongst the larger works, and The Hague *Toilet of Diana and her Nymphs*, with a forged monogram of Nicolas Maas, supposed to have been painted under his master Fabritius. Then comes the dated Dresden *The Proposal* (or *Courtesan*) of 1656. Soon thereafter he wrought the Hague fancy *Portrait of a Girl*, and a fancy *Portrait of a Girl* at Brussels—he is complete master of the painting of limpid light, and has settled his style. He now painted those large openly spaced rooms in which he sets his figures, generally a single figure, against a light wall space that broadly sweeps towards the picture's edge into luminous shadow, the room and figure flooded in the limpid atmosphere, and the room near as empty as the sunlit air; the whole largely composed, with such consummate tact that the artistic folk alone realise with what rhythmic care he wrought the sense aroused in the beholder—the sense of the placid, orderly Dutch life of the great middle and rich class. He now uses a brilliant gamut of colour (who, that has seen it, ever forgets the Vermeer lemon-yellow or the Vermeer pale blue?) and in the brighter lighting you shall find him creating the wizardry of it with curious thick dry paint, to which bear witness *The Milkmaid* of the Six house at Amsterdam, the Amsterdam *Love-Letter*, and the *Letter* in a Berlin collection. He painted in these days his famous landscape, one of the purest landscapes in all Dutch art, the unforgettable *View of Delft* at The Hague—he painted but three recorded landscapes: one has vanished, the other is a *House at Delft* (La Ruelle) in the Six house at Amsterdam.

As the years drew him to his early doom, his colour seems to have grown even cooler, and his touch more smooth, and he gave forth *The Party* at Brunswick, the Bürger *Party*, and the Rothschild *Astronomer* of about 1673.

But always his design is large and simple, and the limpid air holds by preference a single figure—now and again a couple or so. The single figures are generally half-lengths, as in the superb *Pearl Necklace*, in which a girl tries on a necklace before a mirror of which we see but the unreflecting edge—a very masterpiece, the supreme masterpiece of all his glorious art which Berlin has the great fortune to possess. A girl makes lace, or reads, or sits at harpsichord or dressing-table, as at the Louvre—serene and sedate. A student or a painter are seen at their labour. There is little movement, whether we find the *Girl Asleep* over her work as in the Kann Vermeer, or at a spinet as in the resonant *Music-Master and his Pupil* at Windsor, or the superb *Lady at a Spinet* in the National Gallery. He realises decorative effect with the colours and forms of musical instruments or floor-patterns or table-cloths or pictures in frames or the like, employed with consummate tact rather to increase the largeness of his effects than from fear of the emptiness of his rooms; and with what astounding skill these things are severally employed to enhance the scheme and make it attune to the mood of the central figure! How the masterly simplicity of the large background wall compels the intention! For, high above the supreme craftsmanship, the unerring command of light, the rhythmic use of colour, in which Vermeer stands out as one of the most perfect painters of his race and age, he looms as one of the *artists* of the first rank in that he uttered the emotion created by the impression before

XVIII

VERMEER OF DELFT

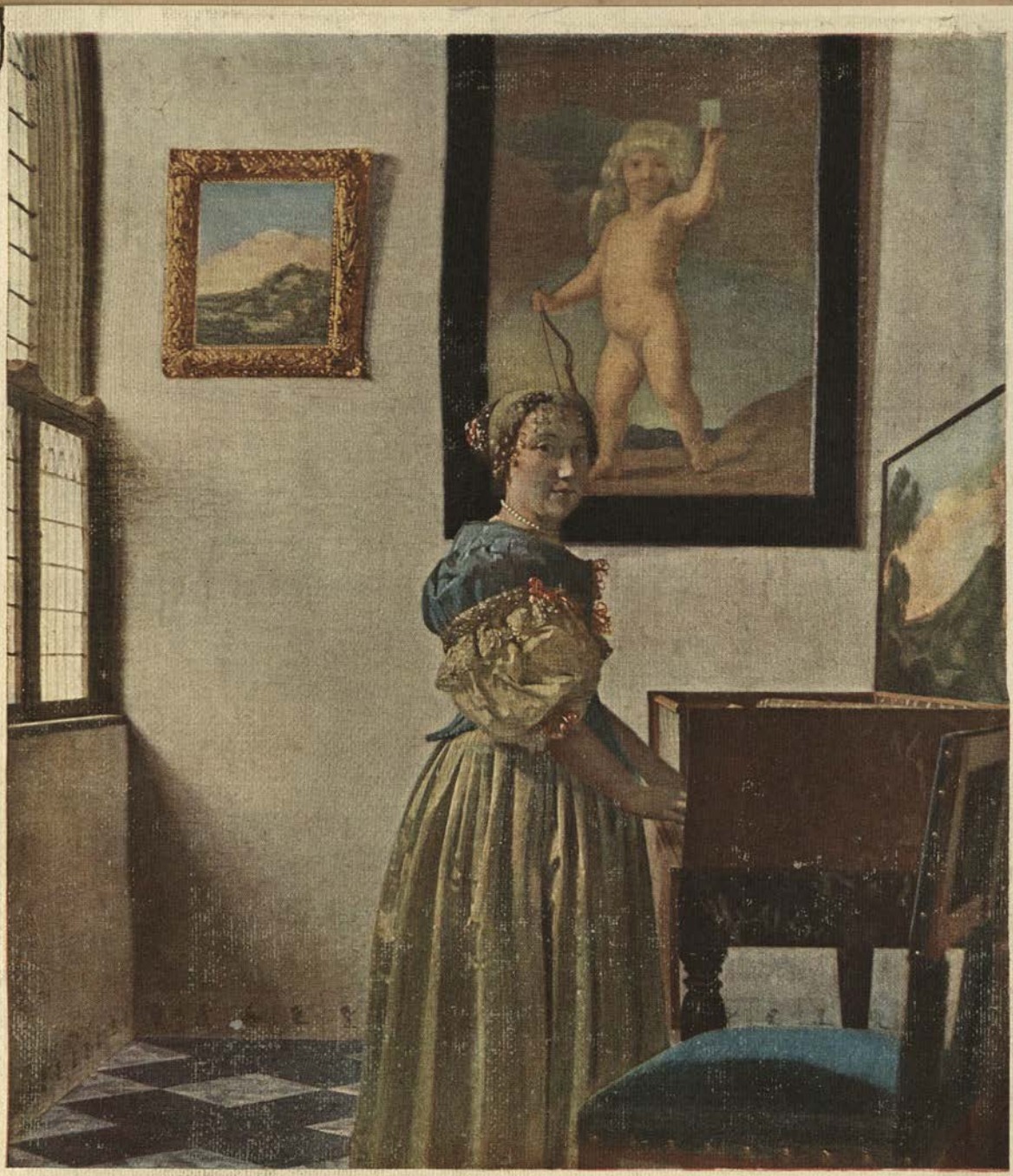
1632 – 1675

DUTCH SCHOOL

"LADY AT A SPINET"

(National Gallery)

Signed "J. V. Meer" (the J. and M. intertwined), on the side of the spinet. Painted in oil on canvas. 1 ft. 8 in. h. × 1 ft. 6 in. w. (0·508 × 0·457).



IN WHICH WE STRIVE AWHILE TO PIERCE THE MYSTERY OF THE SPHINX WHO WAS THE GREATEST OF ALL THE DUTCH-MEN THAT PAINTED THE WELL-TO-DO IN THEIR HOME-LIFE

him with that mystic power that is granted only to genius. He weaves into the perfection of this craftsmanship that subtle atmosphere whereby his figures yield to us the impression of their very thinking and breathing. The room is not only held by light and shadows and beings and objects, but the serene mood of the human being who struts the little moment on the stage. He was master of a more profound knowledge of the mysteries than any that critic's laws or the microscope of science can reveal —the undiscovered secret of the artist alone.

He died wholly poor, this Sphinx—his cause of death unknown.

In his forty-third year quietly stepped out of the ken of his own peaceful, demure, little town of Delft one of the greatest artists of Holland. Twenty years after he died, so forgotten was he, that the fine head of a *Young Girl*, now at The Hague, was sold at public auction for some couple of florins! The Hague possesses besides the famous *View of Delft*, *The Toilet of Diana and her Nymphs*; Berlin has the supreme good fortune to hold the *Pearl Necklace*; Amsterdam has the rival splendour of *The Letter Reader*, the *Servant pouring out Milk*, and the *Lady seated with Mandoline*, holding a letter, in converse with a maid.

To Windsor belongs the beautifully spaced *Music Lesson*. The National Gallery is rich in the *Young Lady at the Spinet*, the Salting Collection has another. In the Beit Collection is the *Young Lady writing a Letter*, her servant waiting the while. Berlin has the *Drinking Wine*; Brunswick the fine *Coquette*; Frankfort the resonant still room in which the figure at the table is taken up with *Geography* (painted in 1668), that subtly painted work in which we can almost hear the man thinking. At the Czernin in

Vienna is the famous *Artist in his Studio*, once given to De Hooch. The Louvre has the *Girl making Lace*. Brussels, in a private collection, possesses the *Girl in a Striped Hat*, whilst at the Arenberg is a *Young Girl*. Dresden has the great good fortune to own the *Reading the Letter*, "with the curtain," long given to Rembrandt, then to De Hooch; and has besides *The Courtesan* (or *Proposal*) of 1656. Buda-Pesth possesses the great *Portrait of a Lady* with a fan and gloves. To America have gone—to the Metropolitan in New York the *Woman with the Jug at a Window*; to the Frick Collection at Pittsburg the *Singing Lesson*; to the Johnston Collection at Philadelphia the *Lady playing a Mandoline*; and to Boston the *Concert*.

Yet the painter of these works had so lapsed out of the books of the history of art, his work largely given to other men, that Fromentin, one of the most brilliant writers upon the Dutch genius, and himself an artist, writing as late as 1875, does not even mention Vermeer by name. It may be said that about 1865 the enthusiasm of Bürger "discovered" the man, whom he called the "Sphinx"; that Havard reduced Bürger's fifty-six pictures to a lesser number; and more modern research by Bredius and De Groot, separating his landscapes from those of Vermeer of Haarlem, has reduced them to about thirty undoubted and some ten challenged works. The catalogue of a sale of some twenty-one paintings by Vermeer at Amsterdam in 1696 fortunately remains.

Of these (1) *A Young Woman weighing Gold*; (2) *A Milkmaid*, the unforgettable work now at Amsterdam; (3) *The Painter in his Studio*, probably the great work at the Czernin in Vienna, long given to De Hooch; (4) *Girl playing a Guitar*, now in the Johnston Collection at Philadelphia; (5) *A Lord in his Chamber*; (6) *Young*

XIX

VERMEER OF DELFT

1632 - 1675

DUTCH SCHOOL

"THE LACE MAKER"

(La Dentellière)

(LOUVRE)

"J. v. Meer," the first three letters being intertwined. Painted in oil on canvas. 9⅓ in. (0·24) square.

Woman at a Spinet, with a Gentleman who listens, at Windsor Castle as *The Music Lesson*, bought in 1820 for 340 florins; (7) *The Young Woman taking a Letter from a Servant-Girl*, at Amsterdam; a fine treatment of an interior, and called *The Letter*; (8) *Servant-Girl asleep at a Table*, of the Kann Collection; (9) *A Cheerful Gathering in a Room*; (10) *A Gentleman and a Young Lady making Music*, in the Frick Collection at Pittsburg; (11) *A Soldier with a Laughing Girl*, in Mrs. Joseph's Collection in London; (12) *The Young Lace-Maker* of the Louvre; (13) The famous *View of Delft* at The Hague; (14) The *House at Delft*, known as *La Ruelle*, in the Six house at Amsterdam; (15) *A View of Several Houses*; (16) The *Young Woman Writing*, in the Beit Collection in London; (17) *Young Woman bedecking Herself*, which is said to be the Berlin *Pearl Necklace*, his supreme masterpiece; (18) The *Young Woman at the Spinet*, which may have been the work at the National Gallery, but would also apply to the Beit picture or the Salting canvas; (19) *Portrait in Antique Dress*, which is considered to be the portrait of a *Young Girl* at The Hague; (20 and 21) *Two Pendants*, supposed to be the Rothschild *Astrologer* and the Frankfort *Geography*.

Jan Vermeer of Delft must not be confused with the great landscape-painter JAN VERMEER OF HAARLEM (or Van der Meer of Haarlem), who lived from 1628 to 1691; nor with the JAN VERMEER (or Van der Meer) OF UTRECHT, who was born at Schönhoven, went to Rome, and joined his guild at Utrecht in 1664.

CHAPTER XIII

WHEREIN THE FOOTMAN TO THE RICH MAN PAINTS THE SUNNY HOME-LIFE OF THE RICH AND GOES TO A PAUPER'S GRAVE

PIETER DE HOOCH

1629 – after 1677

THE GREAT DUTCH PAINTERS OF THE HOME-LIFE UNDER REM-BRANDT

PIETER DE HOOCH, born at Rotterdam in 1629, lived in the years of Vermeer and Maas, than whom he was some three years older. Born to a butcher of Rotterdam and christened on the 20th of December 1629, the child began his career in a winter that was to be the colour of his sad career, in strange contrast with the bright and sunny pictures which were to make his name immortal—"red Pieter de Hooch." Whether Pieter de Hooch learnt the mysteries in Rembrandt's study or not matters little; Rembrandt's art taught him his craft, and set aflame the genius in the man. His teacher was NICOLAS BERCHEM, at whose studio in youth he had as fellow his kinsman, JACOB OCHTERVELT. And it may be that in youthful years spent at Delft he came under Fabritius.

Pieter de Hooch steps into our ken as "painter and footman" to the rich merchant-adventurer Justus la Grange in 1653, his twenty-fourth year. The merchant possessed eight paintings by his "footman." With his master, De Hooch spent these early years between The Hague and Leyden, until he left his service. He had become betrothed to a girl of Delft in his own town of Rotterdam in the April of 1654, one Jannetje van der Burch, married her in

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PIETER DE HOOCH

1629 – 1677

DUTCH SCHOOL

"DUTCH INTERIOR—WITH TWO CAVALIERS AND THE GIRL IN THE RED SKIRT"

(National Gallery)

Signed "P. D. H.," on the table in the left foreground by the window. Painted in oil on canvas. 2 ft. 5 in. h. × 2 ft. 1 in. w. (0·737 × 0·635).

May, and went to Delft. A child was born to the pair in 1655, another in the November of 1656. Meanwhile, on the 20th of September 1655, he had entered the guild of Delft, to which he belonged in 1657. At Delft he became the friend of Vermeer.

WHEREIN THE FOOTMAN TO THE RICH MAN PAINTS THE SUNNY HOME-LIFE OF THE RICH AND GOES TO A PAUPER'S GRAVE

Ten years thereafter he was at Amsterdam, settled thereat some three years. Of his scant life-history little more is known, except that he was alive in 1677, and died soon afterwards in dire want, his art neglected.

Pieter de Hooch began his career by painting subjects then in the vogue, and probably suggested by the different masters he saw about him—guard-rooms and scenes with soldiers and girls at play or in converse, or drinking in the free-and-easy haunts then in fashion. Dublin has his signed *Guard-room*; the Borghese and the Corsini at Rome and private collections have others; the Hermitage his *Morning of a Young Man.* This early work is marked by a broad touch, somewhat careless handling and draughtsmanship, rich lighting and a vigorous colour, called his lemon-yellow and white phase. He loved bright red from the beginning. But in these affairs of soldiers and frail women he is concerned always with the problem of light playing upon high colours—the splendour of the man is there all through.

The influence of Rembrandt has suggested that De Hooch served his apprenticeship to Berchem when that master of many pupils—and a good master, who persuaded his 'prentices to develop their own personality and avoid mimicry—was living in Amsterdam.

After his marriage, De Hooch at Delft rapidly developed that wonderful and brilliant art that makes his name immortal. Rembrandt's genius had shaped his youth; De Hooch at Delft now came under the influence

of Vermeer, and the friendly rivalry thrust forward his genius to its highest endeavour. A few years older than Vermeer, his works such as the Salting *Interior* and the Vienna *Family in a Garden*, long given to Vermeer, reveal his new revelation ; whilst the Berlin *Woman and Child in a Room by a Bed*, and the like Mildmay and Adrian Hope subjects now in America, are closely akin to the art of Maas, to whom they have often been attributed. He was now painting much his own home and wife and children, his sunlight reveals still brighter colours. His home-life takes him out of the rooms where the young bloods toy with fair women and leads him to higher social vision, or rather "society," for he is less concerned with character than with the outer habits of the well-to-do. He strikes the cheerful note that interests society. He loves an open door with the sunlit glimpse beyond ; he is at ease in comfortable, spacious rooms through which the high windows let the daylight stream in clear volume, bathing all in limpid air that casts bright reflections amidst the luminous shadows. All is rich and splendid, as the eye of the rich merchant's "painter and footman" had grown to see it by habit. His purity of glowing colour could scarce be surpassed by pigment.

These ten great years of his splendid and brilliant prime, from 1655 to 1665, have been divided into two periods—the earlier deep golden prime, in which red and brownish-red dominate the colour harmonies, in his Maas-like phase ; the fuller period shows the brighter whiter phase of the fine *Interior* of the Brussels Arenberg Gallery, with blue as the dominant note, in his Vermeer-like phase.

The National Gallery holds his painting of his own house at Delft, the famous *Dutch Courtyard paved with Bricks* of 1658, his *At the Pump in a Courtyard of a Dutch*

XXI

PIETER DE HOOCH

1629 – 1677?

DUTCH SCHOOL

"DUTCH INTERIOR (LADY PLAYING CARDS BEFORE THE FIRE)"

(Intérieur hollandais)

(Louvre)

Signed on the base of one of the columns supporting the mantelpiece :— "P. D. HOOCH." Painted in oil on canvas. 2 ft. 2½ in. × 2 ft. 6½ in. (0·67 × 0·77).

House of 1665, besides his earlier *Dutch Interior*; Buckingham Palace his *Afternoon*; Nuremberg has the well-known *Conversation*. His works are widespread throughout the great galleries.

WHEREIN THE FOOTMAN TO THE RICH MAN PAINTS THE SUNNY HOME-LIFE OF THE RICH AND GOES TO A PAUPER'S GRAVE

But about 1665 Pieter de Hooch, as Nicolas Maas had done at the end of his career, fell from his personal note and took to mere richness, with loss of his wonderful vision for light, and thereafter monotony fell upon him, and emptiness entered into his art. By the 'seventies he had passed into weakness. The flunkey overwhelms him. Like a good footman he shows us into the marble hall and points out the magnificence of dandified young cavaliers in all their bravery making small talk with the ladies, and given up to music and song and dance and frivolities. The home-life of the middle class is changed for the splendour of the aristocrat. He is concerned now with the costumes of fashion, and the mysteries of light recede from him. Shallow, as the skulls of the shallow folk he now limns, has become his art; and, with true artistic instinct perhaps, he bores us as much as his "society entertainments" would have done. "Red De Hooch" probably died about 1681, this immortal painter of clear sunlight, who made red dance in the sun's flood with nervous, sensitive fingers—he whom England ever held in honour, and the largest part of whose hundred works are or have been in English homes.

Founding his art, style, and subjects on Vermeer, De Hooch, and Metsu, was JACOBUS OCHTERVELDT (1635?–1700?), whose *Lady standing at a Spinet* is in the National Gallery—he was kinsman and fellow-pupil of De Hooch under Berchem.

CHAPTER XIV

WHEREIN WE WALK AWHILE WITH THE LESSER PAINTERS OF THE DUTCH HOME-LIFE

BESIDES Gabriel Metsu, there came out of Dou's studio FRANS VAN MIERIS and GODFRIED SCHALCKEN.

FRANS VAN MIERIS
1635 – 1681

THE GREAT DUTCH PAINTERS OF THE HOME-LIFE UNDER REM-BRANDT

FRANS VAN MIERIS was born at Leyden in 1635. The works of Dou's favourite pupil were held in high repute in his day. The National Gallery has his *Lady in a Crimson Jacket with a Parrot*, painted on copper. He was a close friend of Steen. Munich is very rich in his works; and many are at Dresden, Vienna, Florence, and St. Petersburg. He preferred scenes from the life of the well-to-do. The Vienna *Doctor and the Sick Girl* is of 1656, his twenty-first year. Dresden has the *Mieris and his Wife in the Studio.* Indeed, he often appears in his scenes. The Uffizi has his portraits of *Van Mieris and his Family.* Dresden has his *Tinker.* His golden lighting is very characteristic. He died at Leyden in 1681.

SCHALCKEN
1643 – 1706

GODFRIED SCHALCKEN, born at Dort, 1643; went to Hoogstraaten, then to Dou. After he left Dou's studio he went to England; the National Gallery holds four small works by him, of which the best known is the *Old Woman polishing a Copper Vessel.* He painted *William III* and several small portraits whilst in England; but the life of

XXII

PIETER DE HOOCH

1629 – 1677?

DUTCH SCHOOL

"COURT OF A DUTCH HOUSE, PAVED WITH BRICKS"

(National Gallery)

Signed "P. D. H. A°. 1658," on a stone built into the base of the porch. Painted in oil on canvas. 2 ft. 5 in. h. × 1 ft. 11½ in. w. (0·737 × 0·596).

the working class was his chief field of fame. He also painted life-size figures and Bible-subjects. His candle-light effects are well known, as at Dresden, Vienna, Munich, and Amsterdam. Schalcken died at The Hague in 1706.

EGLON HENRI VAN DER NEER, born at Amsterdam in 1643, dying at Düsseldorf in 1703, court-painter to Charles II of Spain, was trained by his famous father, Artus van der Neer, but imitated Netscher and Frans van Mieris. He painted elegant ladies in their home-life, as well as portraits.

ARY DE VOIS (1641-1698), pupil to Knupfer and Van den Tempel, painted in the smooth manner of Frans van Mieris half-length figures from the life of the people, and sometimes landscapes with nude figures.

MOLENAER

There are three artists of the name of Molenaer, who cannot be lightly dismissed. JAN MOLENAER was working from 1625 to 1660, painting peasant life in interiors and the open air. Facile in touch, and warm and clear in colour, he wrought an art akin to the Dutch painters of home-life, and to Teniers. The Berlin *Ballad-Singer* is dated 1631, and signed "Molenaer." JAN MIENSE MOLENAER, pupil to Hals, signed "J. M. Molenaer" to pictures of dancing and feasting peasants at Berlin (1659) and Amsterdam. CLAES MOLENAER, who entered the Haarlem Guild in 1651, dying in 1676, was fond of water landscapes. They all seem to have engraved.

BRAKENBURG

1650 – 1702

Brakenburg of Haarlem was pupil to MOMMERS, entering the Guild in 1687. He painted peasant life under the

influence of A. van Ostade. Windsor has two *Artists' Studios* by him, and Amsterdam an excellent *Interior with Boors Drinking and Smoking.*

EGBERT VAN DER POEL, of Rotterdam, where he died in 1664, is best known for his painting of conflagrations; he also painted subjects in the manner of A. van Ostade. The Louvre has his *Peasants before a Cottage Door.* He it was who painted the *Explosion of a Powder-Magazine at Delft* in which Fabritius was killed.

CASPAR NETSCHER

1639 – 1684

CASPAR NETSCHER, German by birth (he was born at Heidelberg in 1639), is wholly Dutch in training and intention. Founding his art on that of Ter Borch, to whom he went as pupil at Deventer, Netscher mastered draughtsmanship and colour-harmony, but was soon concerning himself with an Italianised aim of grace and elegance. At twenty he started to roam towards Italy, but becoming enamoured of a pretty young Flemish woman of Liège whilst at Bordeaux, he got no further, married the pretty creature, turned back to Holland, and settled at The Hague, where he thenceforth lived and wrought, and where he died in the January of 1684. Painting small portraits and the social indoor life of the upper classes in small works after the manner of his master Ter Borch, if without his power, Netscher became very popular amongst the rich of Holland. His detail and finish caught the Dutch love of minute excellence; and a pseudo-classic affectation in his portraiture, which the domination of the Grand Monarque of France was bringing into the vogue, made a wide demand for the work of Caspar Netscher's hand amongst the great. His art bridges the gap between the great

Dutch painters, across which the Flemish painters were looking towards France. The National Gallery has a couple of *Boys blowing Bubbles* and a *Maternal Instruction* painted by him; and the Wallace Collection the *Portrait of a Child.* He was particular happy with children. Beginning with warm colouring, and reaching to his best work in the middle 'sixties, he then adopted a cool silvery style. Dresden is richest in him. The National Gallery has his *Lady at a Spinning-Wheel* of 1665. Dresden has his *Madame de Montespan* in silvery key of 1670, and *Madame de Montespan with her Son the Duc de Maine.* The Louvre has the *Lesson on the 'Cello.* Netscher died at The Hague in 1684.

CONSTANTIN NETSCHER
1678? – 1722

Caspar Netscher's son Constantin still further crossed the bridge that led from the declining Netherlandish art towards France. He might well be classed with the earlier Frenchmen of Louis the Fourteenth. By 1700 King Sun had conquered Europe. No better example of this surrender to the coming vogue of France could be found than the charming *Jeune Princesse* at the Louvre, who trips it in a pleasant garden, her pseudo-classic draperies fluttering in pseudo-classic swirls about her dainty pseudo-classic body; pseudo-classic sandals on her dainty feet.

VAN MUSCHER
1645 – 1705

MICHIEL VAN MUSCHER, born at Rotterdam in 1645, was pupil to ABRAHAM VAN TEMPEL, from whom he went to Metsu and Adriaen van Ostade. He is best known for his small portraits, of which the Six Collection has an early one of 1678; The Hague a family group of 1681;

the Northbrook *Willem van der Velde* in his studio, and Aremberg *Mother and Children*, of 1683, are two of his masterpieces. He died at Amsterdam in 1705.

JAN VERKOLIE, born at Amsterdam in 1650, died at Delft in 1693. Pupil to Lievens, he became the smooth painter in high finish of home scenes and portraits. He was also a mezzotint-engraver.

DUSART
1660 – 1704

CORNELIS DUSART, born at Haarlem in 1660, dying there in 1704, was pupil to A. van Ostade, of whom he was a life imitator. He joined the Guild of Haarlem in 1679. His favourite subjects were the vulgar merriments of boors. He runs to caricature. He was an etcher and mezzotinter.

B E G A
1620–1664

CORNELIS BEGA, born at Haarlem in 1620, dying in 1664, was a pupil of A. van Ostade, who treated the life of the boors. He was also an etcher.

But the Italianised Dutchmen were now in the vogue. GERARD DE LAIRESSE (1640-1711) was the type of the day, insipid, academic, slick and smooth; he who scorned to fall away to the "vulgarity" of Rembrandt!

VAN DER WERFF
1659 – 1722

Adrian van der Werff of Rotterdam stands apart from the Dutch realism of his day. Elegance and beauty and the ideal are his aim. He painted intensely smooth and finished sacred subjects, in the style that he learnt from his master Eglon van der Neer. Though all his instincts

called him to Dutch realism he followed the ideal, led thereto by the writings and art of the egregious Lairesse, studying the antique, and running into coldness by consequence. He came into wide vogue amongst the rich and the great, and was unable to meet all the demands upon him. His chief patron was the Elector John William, and many works by him are therefore to be seen at Munich; but the Louvre, the Hermitage, Berlin, Dresden, and Amsterdam possess works by him.

PIETER VAN DER WERFF, born at Rotterdam in 1665, and dying there in 1718, was pupil to his brother Adrian van der Werff, whom he imitated, with his *St. Jerome*, his *Two Girls crowning a Statue of Cupid*, and the rest of it.

HENDRICK VAN LIMBORCH, born at The Hague in 1680, and dying in 1758, was pupil to Adrian van der Werff, and imitated his historical subjects, as well as painting portraits and landscapes.

JAN PHILIP VAN SCHLICHTEN, who died in 1745, was pupil to Adrian van der Werff, and an imitator.

NICOLAS VERKOLIE, born at Delft in 1673, dying there in 1746, though pupil to his father JAN VERKOLIE, imitated Adrian van der Werff. He was a skilled mezzotinter.

PHILIP VANDYK, born at Amsterdam in 1680, and dying at The Hague in 1753, was pupil to VAN BOONEN, but imitated Adrian van der Werff.

JACOB DE WIT, born at Amsterdam in 1695, dying in 1784, came into vogue for his imitation of sculpture, bronze, wood, plaster and marble, and his painting of pretty children.

VAN MOOR
1656 - 1738

KAREL VAN MOOR, born at Leyden in 1656, dying in 1738, was pupil to Gerard Dou, to Van der Tempel, and

THE GREAT DUTCH PAINTERS OF THE HOME-LIFE UNDER REMBRANDT

to Frans Mieris, whose realism he imbibed in his paintings of sacred and pagan subjects. He came to distinction in portraiture. He also painted the home-life; and was an etcher.

HERMAN VAN DER MYN, born at Amsterdam in 1684, was pupil to ERNST STEVEN, and, like his master, at first painted flowers and fruit, but went on to portraiture, which he practised during a long residence in London. Of his five sons and daughters, who all painted in London, the best were GERHART VAN DER MYN, born in 1706, and FRANS VAN DER MYN, born in 1719, who painted portraits in the French style.

A. DE PAPE; WILLEM VAN MIERIS, born at Leyden in 1662, dying there in 1747, pupil to his father Frans van Mieris, and his imitator; FRANS VAN MIERIS *the Younger*, born at Leyden in 1689, dying there in 1763, son and pupil to Willem van Mieris, shows the school in hopeless decline; A. D. SNAPHAAN imitated FRANS VAN MIERIS *the Elder*; ARNOLD VAN BOONEN, born at Dordrecht in 1669, died 1729, pupil to Schalcken, whom he imitated, even to the candle-light; and LODOWYCK DE MONY, born at Breda in 1698, dying at Leyden in 1771, pupil to Philip Vandyk.

THE INHABITED LANDSCAPE

CHAPTER XV

OF THE SEIZURE OF LANDSCAPE BY THE HORSE-SOLDIERS

OF THE SEIZURE OF LANDSCAPE BY THE HORSE-SOLDIERS

THUS we see golden Rembrandt and silvery Hals supreme in the larger Dutch achievement, with, and very close to them, a group of painters of the Home-Life of the people, each in his way supreme—Vermeer of Delft, De Hooch, Ter Borch, Brouwer, Ostade, Maas, Metsu and Steen. These painters of the Home-Life were chiefly working in the mid-century.

But there had also arisen in Holland a great school of painters of Landscape and Still-Life. These stand in splendour of achievement beside the great painters of the Home-Life, with whom they are akin, and into whose realm they constantly trespass, creating what Dr. Bode has neatly termed the INHABITED LANDSCAPE—landscapes in which the life of the people as passed out of doors is as fully rendered as in the paintings of the Home-Life.

We have seen Adriaen van Ostade's brother ISACK VAN OSTADE (1621-1649) pass from the Home-Life to the Inhabited Landscape; as we have seen Vermeer of Delft painting the *View of Delft*. And we will now survey the great school of Landscape, taking first the Inhabited Landscape which, chiefly in the form of Pastorals, brought forth the high genius of Wouverman, Cuyp, Paul Potter, with Isack van Ostade and Adriaen van de Velde; and the pure Landscape which brought forth the master-work of Ruisdael, Hobbema, and gave birth to the superb

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seascapes of Cuyp, Willem van de Velde, and Van der Capelle.

To round the great Dutch achievement came the fine animal painter, Hondecoeter, and the superb painters of Still-Life, De Heem, Kalf, and Van Beijeren.

THE PAINTERS OF SKIRMISHES

The Dutch were early interested in the horse, and in the animals that take so prominent a place in the lives of a pastoral people. The horse, besides its interest in the work of their everyday home-life, had a romantic interest in its relation to war—and the Dutch have always greatly employed the horse in war, their natural instinct being to fight guerilla-warfare—and they are by nature hunters.

Together with their interest in the Home-Life and Landscape, the wars, with the soldiery picketed over the land, turned Dutch eyes to the picturesque life of the soldier, a subject created by the Thirty Years' War.

ESAIAS VAN DE VELDE (1590?-1630) and ADRIAEN P. VAN DER VENNE (1589-1662), were early painting skirmishes and the like subjects.

ANTON PALAMEDESS, called STEVENS or STEVERS, son of a sculptor and jewel-setter to James I of England, was born in London about 1601. He entered the Guild at Delft in 1621. He imitated Dirk Hals. He painted portraits, but is best known by his military subjects, guard-room scenes, and the like, with skirmishes.

PALAMEDES STEVENS, called PALAMEDESS, brother to Anton, was born in 1607, dying at Delft in 1638. He is best known for his *Skirmishes*.

A. DUC was another painter of the soldiery in the manner of Palamedes. He must not be confused with a better artist, Jan le Ducq.

OF THE SEIZURE OF LANDSCAPE BY THE HORSE-SOLDIERS

JAN LE DUCQ is somewhat confusing, as there were clearly two of the name. One born in 1629 came completely under the influence of the Palamedes, and bettered their art, in a series of guard-rooms and portraits. The other JAN LE DUCQ was a pupil of Paul Potter, and painted animals and made etchings—born at The Hague in 1636, he was free of the Guild in 1658.

DIRK STOOP (1610-1686), who lived long in England, was much given to battle-scenes and the life of the soldier, particularly the horse-soldier. He etched several plates in which horses are the chief subject.

We have seen DE LAER painting and etching the horse.

PIETER CORNELIS VERBECK, son of Cornelis Verbeck, free of the Haarlem Guild in 1610, was a good painter of landscapes and of animals, best known for his cavalry combats. He also etched.

DE MOLYN

1595? – 1661

PIETER DE MOLYN, born in London before 1600, settled at Haarlem, entering the Guild in 1616. He developed landscape-painting in which figures of men and horses and cattle take a marked part, and largely created those skirmishes and the "inhabited landscapes" that form so favourite a part of the Dutch genius. He was also an etcher. He exercised wide influence and trained many pupils.

WYNANTS

1605? – after 1682

JAN WYNANTS, born at Haarlem in or before 1605, was one of the first Dutch artists to concentrate his gifts

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on pure landscape. Of him little is known, whether of his life or his masters, except that he was a member of the rhetoric club in 1626; that 1641 is the earliest date of any known picture by him, and that he settled at Amsterdam about 1660, and died thereat after 1682. He sought truth and spent his strength upon detail. His figures were painted for him by his friends of repute. The Hague has his *Wooded Landscape* of 1659; Amsterdam a *Landscape* with huntsmen and animals by A. van de Velde, who also painted the cattle in the Dresden *Landscape* with wide gateway (1665); the Louvre has a *Landscape* with cattle by Van de Velde, who also painted the huntsmen and shepherds in the large *Landscape* in the same gallery, dated 1668. In the Munich *Road* of 1672, the cattle are by Lingelbach. England is rich in him. Buckingham Palace has his landscape with falconers by Wouverman. One of his several pictures in the National Gallery is dated 1659.

But the greatest of the so-called painters of skirmishes was PHILIPS WOUVERMAN.

CHAPTER XVI

WHEREIN WE TAKE TO THE HIGH ROAD WITH WOUVERMAN ASTRIDE A WHITE HORSE AND KNOW ROMANCE

WOUVERMAN
1619 – 1668

WHEREIN WE TAKE TO THE HIGH ROAD WITH WOUVERMAN ASTRIDE A WHITE HORSE AND KNOW ROMANCE

Philips Wouverman, or Wouwerman, or Wouwermans, of Haarlem, was born in 1619, and was to come to fame in the realm of the "inhabited landscape" that was the glory of Cuyp, of Paul Potter, and of Adriaen van de Velde; and, like them all, he was to be content to live in his own land. And, like two of them, Potter and Van de Velde, he was to know only a short life, if a feverishly active one. But, though Wouverman did not live to see fifty, and some twenty years of youth must be snatched from an artist's achievement, he poured forth in the thirty years of his working life a prodigious mass of work.

Dying the day before he would have reached his forty-ninth birthday, blessed with wealth that made work no necessity to him, he painted some thousand pictures, besides the figures and animals in many of the landscapes by his friends. Dresden alone has sixty paintings by him; and the Hermitage as many. And his was no slight achievement. Painting into his landscapes often a large number of figures and animals, wrought with great delicacy; rich in imagination and tireless in invention; intensely original and personal, he painted the outdoor life of the

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more romantic class in the land of the Dutch with exquisite gifts. The spacious grandeur of his scenery at times is stupendous; and he has astonishing skill in so placing his horsemen and his figures as to enhance this large and spacious impression, often wrought into a small area. When he painted with most miniature touch, his style and handling remained large.

We are wont ever to look for Wouverman's white horse; and it is told of dealers in the days gone by that they refused any painting by him that had no white horse. The critics, when the horse was missing, apologised for the omission. As a matter of fact, it is in his splendour of landscape, and the consummate tact with which he set the figures in that landscape, that his greatness lies. He was a poet of romance. He drew romance by the skirt into his very stables.

Wouverman grew up under the shadow of the Thirty Years' War; and he it was who brought the glamour of the fashionable *Skirmishes* to their most lyrical utterance. He loved the swaggering life of the soldier, and gives us the whole glamour of the tragedy and the comedy of it. In camp and quarter, drinking, gambling, duelling; the call to arms, the challenge of sentries, the rush to arms, the clash of battle, the looting of towns, the blackguardisms of the scoundrelly gangs that hang on the wake of an army, the plunder of sacked villages, Wouverman pictured it all.

But he stated also the ways of peace, the traffic of the highway, the moods of the level fields and woodlands, and the habits of the great in the hunt—the stately meet, the halt to drink, all the jolly business of the chase, and the horn of the hunter is heard in the land. Hawking, a favourite sport, he often treated. Along the high road the gallants ride escort to the carriage full of fine ladies to pay their

visit. Gipsies, forges, the smithy, the highwayman, the robbery of the coach, the peasants at work in the fields, the market cart, and all the outdoor life of the day, Wouverman compelled it into those thousand paintings which are a complete record of the highroad of his age! No matter how vast the crowd, he could arrange them all as at a stroke with consummate gift of composition. A fine draughtsman, with exquisite delicacy of touch, he did for the outdoor life of the Dutch landed class what Steen did for the indoor life of the smaller townsfolk. His instinct for landscape took him into the open, his colour-sense and his feeling for aerial space were as the breath of the fresh breezes to him. The silvery light of Holland plays throughout all his art. And though the expert may give him the cold shoulder to-day, and the collector thrust his works into a corner, Wouverman remains one of the great artists of Holland, and his place can never be taken by another.

WHEREIN WE TAKE TO THE HIGH ROAD WITH WOUVERMAN ASTRIDE A WHITE HORSE AND KNOW ROMANCE

Though he monogramed his work, he rarely dated it; but we may roughly guess his advances. Growing up in the studio of his father, PAUL JOOSTEN WOUVERMAN, Philips Wouverman seems to have been trained by Jacob de Wet, Rembrandt's pupil; and he became subject to Pieter de Laer, who returned to Haarlem the year that Wouverman, at twenty, entered the Guild (1639); and for a time he painted so like De Laer that it is difficult to separate their pictures. But a study of Wouverman soon shows marked differences. And he early left his brown tones behind, even during his twenties rapidly getting away from their influence in that series of small landscapes with very small figures, of which we see examples in the National Gallery, the Hermitage, and at Berlin. Once finding himself, his duties saw him pouring forth the vast flood of his rich,

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imaginative, finely composed masterpieces, silvery and bright in colour, and remarkable for their aerial vision.

JAN WOUVERMAN (1629-1666), and PIETER WOUVERMAN (1623-1683), were younger brothers of Wouverman, and painted some good landscapes with figures in his manner.

HENRIK VERSCHURING, born at Gorcum in 1627, the pupil of Jan Both, went to Italy, returning to Gorcum in 1653, where he became burgomaster. His early work, founded on Pieter de Laer, gave way to scenes from the life of the soldiery, skirmishes, and robbers. He was drowned at Dordrecht in 1690.

JOON VAN HUCHTENBURGH, born at Haarlem in 1646, and dying in 1733, went as pupil to Jan Wyck, then to his brother Jacob, a landscape-painter, who drew him to Rome in 1667, whence he went to Van der Meulen in Paris, thence back to Holland in 1670, where he came to considerable vogue as a painter of cavalry combats, skirmishes, hunts and the like. Prince Eugene employed him in 1708 or 1709 in battle-pictures. He was probably considerably influenced by the work of Wouverman.

CHAPTER XVII

WHEREIN WE BASK IN THE SUNLIT MEADOWS WITH CUYP, AMIDST THE DROWSY CATTLE, AND KNOW THE PAGEANT OF THE SEA

CUYP
1620–1691

WHEREIN WE BASK IN THE SUNLIT MEADOWS WITH CUYP, AMIDST THE DROWSY CATTLE, AND KNOW THE PAGEANT OF THE SEA

Aelbert Cuyp, the Great Cuyp, *the* Cuyp, born at Dordrecht in 1620 to the brilliant portrait-painter, Jacob Gerretz Cuyp, was to surpass his father in the high achievement of his great career. Pupil to his father, whose wide gifts covered fine landscape-painting, Cuyp was to subordinate his finely painted cattle and figures to his glowing landscape. To Cuyp was given a large poetic sense of the sun-filled atmosphere that bathes the broad sluggish waterways and low-lying lands of the world that bred him; and he set the kine upon the river-banks or on the knolls of level Holland, and bathed them in the sun's radiance with a consummate sense of the peace of day when lowing herds go to the water to drink, or the milkmaids are busy with their pails. He saw Holland with a large eye, and stated the land and luminous heavens with a breadth of style and a masterly handling that set him beside Ruisdael as poet and artist, though a wide gulf separates the troubled melancholy soul of Ruisdael from the joy in the peaceful pastoral life that made the jocund art of Cuyp. Nor did he content himself with landscape; he is as great as animal-painter, and a fine portraitist.

And if you would see how he bathed the landscape and

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all that dwell therein in light, look upon his cattle that stand in the cool waters of the superbly composed *River Scene with Cattle* at the National Gallery. With what a dignity the whole thing is composed; with such skill that it seems uncalculated, seen as at a stroke to the eye, peaceful yet resonant, as though into the vast aerial space were voiced a triumphant hymn of praise. And in those other masterpieces upon the same walls—that superbly seen landscape in which the red-coated lord of acres in his broad-brimmed hat, sitting astride his grey, his hounds at heel, speaks to a shepherdess, pointing his whip into the sunlit airy leagues away; or that golden *Cattle with Figures* (or "Large Dort"), in which the milkmaid pours the milk into the great jars; or the stately *River Scene with Castle*—with what consummate decorative sense, with what vigorous grip of impression, and with what mastery of the wizardry of light the Dutchman states the large mood of the thing seen! Except in St. Petersburg and at Budapest and places difficult of access, his other masterpieces are in private keeping, largely in England. The Dulwich Gallery is very rich in him. And the superb masterpiece of *The Maas, with Shipping*, in the Bridgewater Collection, shows Cuyp as great upon the waters and in the pageant of great shipping as in the pastoral, of which he is one of the supreme masters of all time.

Of Cuyp, at least, it is pleasant to know that he had honour in his day, and knew good fortune. By the waters of Dordrecht that he loved to paint, he owned estates outside the town. He had the respect of the citizens and held high offices of trust. And with his town, and his honour in that town, he was well content; maybe his repute went little further afield, nor did he seek it. The tower of old Dordrecht is seen in nearly all his distances.

XXIII

CUYP

1620–1691

DUTCH SCHOOL

"LANDSCAPE, WITH CATTLE AND FIGURES AND THE HORSEMAN IN SCARLET"

(National Gallery)

Signed on the bottom right-hand corner. Painted in oil on canvas. 4 ft. 4 in. h. × 6 ft. 6 in. w. (1·321 × 1·981).

OF PAINTING

WHEREIN WE BASK IN THE SUNLIT MEADOWS WITH CUYP, AMIDST THE DROWSY CATTLE, AND KNOW THE PAGEANT OF THE SEA

Son and grandson of artists, with many artists for his kin, he was born in the atmosphere in which he was to come to immortality.

Early mastering the tools of his craft in his father's studio, he painted his portraits, his great cattle-pieces, and his landscapes; and art so filled his life that he was thirty-eight before he took to himself a wife, and her a widow, from one of the patrician families of the town. His marriage brought him great increase of wealth. He had painted already a large number of small landscapes. Being signed and mostly dated, we can trace his art from 1639, he being nineteen, through his twenties; and always you will find in his art this keen eye for the glamour of light that bathes the land—always that breadth of view and of handling. He seemed born with consummate sense of tone and values, and that fairy gift of melting the objects into their depth of air.

His early difficulties were with the figure and animals, but he set himself with dogged will to master his defects; and the National Gallery *Portrait of a Man* shows that in 1649, his twenty-ninth year, he could paint character with such power that he steps into the rank of the great. At the same time, on the edge of his thirties, his white silvery lighting gives way to mellow gold. His *View of Dordrecht* now in America, and his Frankfort *Flock of Sheep* of 1650, reveal his increase of colour-sense. Unfortunately, he now ceases the habit of dating his works, but by his mid-thirties he reached the vigorous and bold manner of his great period, which lasted until on the edge of fifty. And in those years he wrought those splendid works, arranged and painted with that sense of grandeur, flooded with golden sunlight, which raises him amongst the supreme masters. Dorchester House has a *View of Dordrecht*, and the great

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river banks with cattle we have already looked upon. His arrangements were large, and his treatment of foregrounds so powerful and so largely handled that the aerial deeps are ever enhanced by them without sentimentality or prettinesses. His construction gives always the mood of grandeur. This was the time also of his portraits, which, fine as they are, we would gladly have spared to his superb landscapes. The great period of an artist is always so small a time, and the years flit. Fortunately, many of the portraits took the equestrian form; and Cuyp was too fine an artist to miss the picturesque qualities that lie in what the pedants to-day sneer at as being baroque. At the same time, it drew Cuyp away from landscape and the more subtle poetry of landscape, and his fifties and sixties were too much given to the fancy costume; but the two luminous equestrian paintings in the Louvre show him in stately splendour. These later years saw him interested in horses, and he painted them much; though he missed something of Wouverman's imagination and air in the field that Wouverman made his own.

Cuyp ranged so widely, painted so much of which he had not sincere poetic grip, that on the Continent he is often disparaged, since his lesser works—his early and his late—are there best known. To us, in England, he looms in all his power; and we have ever honoured him at his worth. The National Gallery, the Wallace, and the Bridgewater Galleries, to say nothing of many collections in noble houses in England, hold most of his masterpieces. And in his art we find the glamour of his glory in Nature, and a splendour of sunlight, with all that wizardry of a world bathed in its glow which yield a fragrance and a fascination that set Cuyp amongst the great painters of the ages. To him was given the mastery over golden light such as no

XXIV

CUYP

1620–1691

DUTCH SCHOOL

"CATTLE AND FIGURES WITH THE MILKMAID"

or

"THE LARGE DORT"

(National Gallery)

Painted in oil on wood. 2 ft. 2½ in. h. × 3 ft. 3½ in. w. (0·673 × 1·002).

other Dutchman ever knew, so that everything he saw he bathed in light; and the low-lying flats of his beloved Dordrecht filled the world on which the sun shone with luminous vapours as though they had found their poet and their interpreter. And he brought to his wizardry a gift of arrangement such as was never surpassed by his fellows. To Claude Lorrain, to Ruisdael and Hobbema, our modern debt is heavy indeed; but to none is it heavier than to Aelbert Cuyp. He caught the glory out of the sunlight and drew it across his canvas and fixed it there to gladden the heart of man in his dignified and impressive art which is like a mighty anthem of thanksgiving to be alive, whether in the glow of winter or the glory of the summer, whether at the break of day or at the day's ending, or in the glamour of the night. And the world does well to acclaim him one of the supreme masters of the great Dutch achievement; as it is fortunate in possessing six hundred landscapes by him.

WHEREIN WE BASK IN THE SUNLIT MEADOWS WITH CUYP, AMIDST THE DROWSY CATTLE, AND KNOW THE PAGEANT OF THE SEA

CHAPTER XVIII

WHEREIN WE HOLD COMMUNION WITH THE HERDS AND FLOCKS IN THE COMPANY OF PAUL POTTER

THE INHABITED LANDSCAPE

PAUL POTTER
1625 – 1654

PAUL POTTER, one of the three early-doomed Dutch painters of animals in landscapes destined never to see his thirtieth year, was the son of a painter of animals in landscapes—that PIETER SYMONSZ POTTER (1597-1652) whose *Stag Hunt* is in the National Gallery. These Potters came of the noble house of the lords of Egmont.

PAUL POTTER has passed through many vogues—to-day it is the fashion to sneer at his large animal pictures like the famous *Bull* at Amsterdam, and to praise his lesser works such as the poor examples by which he is unfortunately represented in the National Gallery.

Paul Potter, born at Enckhuysen in the November of 1625, and trained in his father's workshop, soon surpassed his master, and at fifteen was an astoundingly finished painter. It were as though the fates were granting him his gifts in some pity for his early doom, for he was only to live to his twenty-eighth year, snatched away by a malignant disease.

Paul Potter seems to have wandered from Amsterdam about 1646 to Delft, and thence in 1649 to The Hague,

entering the Hague Guild. At The Hague he won the favour of Prince Maurice of Orange. Potter married, whilst at the Hague, the daughter of an architect called Balkenede; but in 1652 he returned to Amsterdam, probably knowing that he was a doomed man.

WHEREIN WE HOLD COMMUNION WITH THE HERDS AND FLOCKS IN THE COMPANY OF PAUL POTTER

It is true that his masterpieces are amongst his smaller works; but his great *Bull* at Amsterdam, and his *Dirk Tulp on Horseback* in the Six Collection there, are fine works. The Tulp is frankly an equestrian portrait, and, judged as such, it is not to be lightly condemned, when inferior equestrian portraits by Italians are gushingly praised. However, whether large or small, the unequal art of this suffering and moody young fellow at times reaches to astounding power.

There is something compelling in the simplicity of the landscape in which he sets his animals. He caught that curious homeliness of the pastoral as none other caught it. He rid it of all affectation, painted it with downright truth, and uttered thereby the strangely haunting fragrance of the simple theme. His many masters matter little; he discarded them all for his mistress, Nature. When it is said he had no imagination, it is probably meant that he had little inventive skill; but he uttered the lyrical realism of the pastoral in a simple ballad-like form that is redolent of our old English balladry, and akin to the verse of Robert Burns. His emotional sense is prodigious. The depth of feeling in the pastoral that he arouses in us is a marvel. What he saw, that he turned into poetry with the skill of his hand.

He is said to have been a timid, awkward youth in Nicolas Moeyaert's studio; well, however awkward, he left it at an age when most lads were entering it, and he went out into the fields of his homeland and

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painted the flocks and herds as they had never been painted before.

That he was the "greatest painter of animal life" I would not say with Bode. But he was one of the greatest. Nor do I agree with him that he could not compose. No man who has ever essayed to create art but will recognise in his cunning of disposition the supreme skill which hides skill so astutely as to give the impression of the uncalculated effect. Look at the grandeur, the sublime immensity of the Munich *Farm*! (1646) painted in his twenty-first year, one of the finest compositions ever arranged by mortal hands. That "awkwardness" of arrangement, so often complained of, is just exactly what utters the clumsiness of cattle. It is the complaint of the academic who cannot see style as the inevitable form for the mood, but desire all things to be made by rule and plummet. The arrangement of the large *Bull* at Amsterdam is consummate in its bullishness. His eye for detail was keen as vision of hawk; but how astoundingly he disciplined it to the general impression! Compare him with Van der Neer. With what mastery he suggested his level land by leaving out the middle-distances! How he compels the coherence of the whole by his big, simple foregrounds, by his single blasted or stunted tree-trunk! How it surprises one on touching his paint to find how smooth is the surface wherein he has modelled the wool of sheep so that one feels as if one could sink one's fingers into the woolliness! How broad and massive he is, for all his detail! He is the very poet of the bucolic pastoral, the ballad-monger of the pastures; so that he makes us feel an unutterable oneness with life by his interpretation of the dumb herds and flocks. And they tell me this man has no imagination! Look at that haunting pastoral called *Boys Bathing* at The

WHEREIN WE HOLD COMMUNION WITH THE HERDS AND FLOCKS IN THE COMPANY OF PAUL POTTER

Hague! What more skilled masterpiece could hand of man project? Potter was the supreme Dutch impressionist of the pastoral life of the peasant, as Cuyp was the great poet of the pastoral life of the owners of the land. With Potter we know the animal as we do not know it from any other Dutchman—he conveys to us the slow ruminating of the will and the sluggish habit of the body of sheep and cow, mildly content to chew the cud; he gives us the alert will of the dog. He has the shepherd's skill of comradeship with their dumb desires; and like the shepherd he steps half-way across that mystic gulf that separates man from the cattle.

With that rightness of judgment that is the instinct of the artist, and leads to the creative faculty, beyond law and ordering, Potter makes the landscape absolutely akin to the mood of the pastoral subject—broadly and simply uttered. And when the skies threaten storm, how the animals catch the dread of it!

Potter is said to have painted over a hundred works, and to have made many drawings, while several etchings by him are known. Berlin is rich in his drawings.

The disease that sapped the young fellow's life was near done with him when Van der Helst painted him; a few weeks thereafter he died at Amsterdam.

Paul Potter is said to have had two imitators, RAPHAEL CAMPHUYSEN and ALBERT KLOMP, whose works are often mistaken for his. But these artists are confusing. Dirk Rafaelsz (1586-1626) had two sons, GOVERT KAMPHUYSEN (1624-1674) and RAPHAEL KAMPHUYSEN, who died in 1691. If Raphael Kamphuysen were pupil to Potter, his two signed Dresden moonlights are rather painted in the manner of Van der Neer; and there seem to have been

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two more of the name, RAPHAEL CAMPHUYSEN and JOACHIM CAMPHUYSEN, at Rotterdam. There are three cattle-pieces at Amsterdam, one at Rotterdam, a woman milking a cow with a herd at Dresden, by KLOMP in the manner of Cuyp, of A. van de Velde, and of Potter; there are dated pictures by him of 1602 and 1603.

LANDSCAPE

1650

CHAPTER XIX

WHEREIN WE MEET THE TRAGIC POET OF DUTCH LANDSCAPE AND BURY HIM IN A PAUPER'S GRAVE

EVERDINGEN
1621 – 1675

WHEREIN WE MEET THE TRAGIC POET OF DUTCH LAND-SCAPE AND BURY HIM IN A PAUPER'S GRAVE

ALLART VAN EVERDINGEN, born at Alkmaar in 1621, became, like Ter Borch, the pupil of Peter Molyn. He lived at Haarlem from 1645 to 1651. He sometimes paints in the manner of Van Goyen; but he is said to have gone to Norway, and there came to that love of rocky scenes with great fir-trees that shelter foaming waterfalls and dark, sombre waters, which he wrought into the pictures by which he is best known—and which had not too good an effect upon the art of better men. He was famous as an etcher. He died at Amsterdam in 1675.

JACOB VAN RUISDAEL
1628-9 – 1682

Even Bode bursts into reckless enthusiasm about Ruisdael—claims him as "next to Rembrandt, first amongst all the artists of Holland." This is essentially the talk of the bookish man. No artist would make such a statement with Frans Hals and Vermeer of Delft to stand between. But let it pass. Criticism has copied the enthusiasm in reams of transports. And, of a truth, Ruisdael was a great landscape-painter. And when with pure

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Dutch feeling he paints his own land, as in the superb *Coast Scene* in the National Gallery or the famed *Windmill* at Amsterdam, he reaches to such mastery as it is difficult to set except in the front rank of art. But in his Alpine torrents amid their gloomy forest edges he drops into a lesser place; whilst the Hobbema in the Kann Collection makes his famous Berlin *Oak Wood* on the river's edge a lesser achievement. But then Bode feels "charm" in the tense and most gloomy moods of Ruisdael's dramatic genius; and Ruisdael never intended it! Indeed, Bode can almost smell the workhouse when he stands before a masterpiece by Ruisdael! And if he call him "the greatest landscapist of all time," after all he might have chosen a worse man.

He who would sense the art of Ruisdael, or of Rembrandt, or of Hals, must leave this smell of the burning of all this midnight oil behind him, and surrender himself to the mood essayed by the man. There have been greater landscape-painters than Ruisdael; what does it matter? But that which he saw he uttered with great gifts; and in his realm he is of the great ones. In his glooming moods he is compelling; in the mood that the seashore roused in him when he painted the National Gallery masterpiece he is as compelling. But he was to know a bitter wayfaring through his span of life; and the sadness of life settled upon him and enwrapped the whole world in which he dwelt and which he uttered in unforgettable fashion.

JACOB VAN RUYSDAEL or RUISDAEL was born at Haarlem in 1628 or 1629 to the picture-dealer and artist, Isack Ruisdael, who probably taught the boy his earlier exercises; but the lad learnt the fuller mysteries from his uncle Salomon Ruysdael. Yet he owed more to the men about him. About the year that he was born, Haarlem was divided between the older

WHEREIN WE MEET THE TRAGIC POET OF DUTCH LAND-SCAPE AND BURY HIM IN A PAUPER'S GRAVE

school of Van Goyen with its grey-toned vision on the one hand, and the school of the younger men who were going back to Nature's brighter colour-schemes, and developing personal style of handling, under the leadership of CORNELIS VROOM, who was supported by DUBOIS and VAN DER VEEN and others, all concerned with bringing back green to the fields and to the grass and foliage. They wandered from the streets and waterways and the high road that were the haunts of man, and went into the woods and strolled by the still waters and communed with the silences. To the brooding lad they revealed a larger realism, and brought back something of the revelation of Seghers to Dutch art.

Ruisdael entered the Haarlem Guild in 1648, his twentieth year. His early period, from 1646 to 1653, saw him produce the hundred works which are largely signed and dated. They are simple in motive and design, and sincere studies of Nature in the manner of Vroom and Dubois, elaborately careful of detail, of which there is much. Rapidly his artistry increased until the detail was subordinated and a larger style came to him, and at the end of his years at Haarlem he roamed further afield and grew to love the distances and the great heavens over the low level lands. The great *Castle of Bentheim* in the Beit Collection in London was of 1654. The mid-'fifties saw him roaming over the hilly lands of Cleves and Münster where castles and woods abound.

Some years before 1659 he went to Amsterdam, where he lived until 1681, when, after a serious illness, he went back to his native Haarlem. His art was never appreciated at its value, but he struggled with some measure of success, perhaps by remaining unmarried, and his lonely life was devoted to keeping his father in his old age.

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His advance in his art from youth can be followed by dates here and there upon his works—in his early work he was much inclined towards signing and dating, and seems to have been uncertain of the spelling of his name. Before leaving Haarlem the figures in his landscapes were painted in for him by Adriaen van Ostade, by Berchem, and by Wouverman. After he went to Amsterdam this kindly office was wrought by his friend A. van de Velde, who died in 1672. To the sixteen hundred and seventies belong most of his paintings of the seashore and of the streets. From Amsterdam he went on the sea, and painted it in its fret with the heavens that came down to it and made its disturbance, and he did it superbly in the 'sixties of the sixteen-hundreds. To these 'sixties belong not only the seascapes and seashores, but the woodlands and the early winter scenes. Berlin and the Hermitage have the best-known *Woodlands*, Vienna the *Oak Wood*. Amsterdam has the great *Windmill on the Beach*, and the National Gallery the immortal *Beach of Noordwijk*. This was his supreme period; and in it he wrought some of the finest master-pieces in the whole range of Dutch landscape. In their presence we almost forgive Bode his lack of art sense in dubbing them "the greatest delineations of landscape ever produced by art." They are very great, even amongst greater. Here Ruisdael reached his highest poetic utterance.

Later, Ruisdael seems to have been moved by the Norwegian waterfalls of Everdingen. From the middle 'seventies to his death his art declined. The disease that destroyed him was now preventing his converse with the Nature he loved. He joyed in his art still, but his vision had to be satisfied with inward gazing. The brown ground has come through his thinner paint and darkened

his colour—he used a larger canvas and fell back on the sketches of his friends, and through the eyes of Everdingen he looked upon Norway; through the eyes of Roghman and Hackaert upon the mountains of Switzerland. He took to waterfalls and the rush and roar of tumbling waters.

WHEREIN WE MEET THE TRAGIC POET OF DUTCH LAND-SCAPE AND BURY HIM IN A PAUPER'S GRAVE

In 1681, alarmed by a serious illness, the lonely man got him back to his native town of Haarlem, to take refuge in the hospital of his Mennonite friends, in which lonely home he died a few months later, to be buried in a pauper's grave.

But the loneliness of the man had this for his fame that it drove him back upon his art, and he brooded upon the sombre world as he saw it, until his nervous fingers gave forth his deep feeling in stately, poetic landscape. He caught the haunting moods and vague indefinable yearnings that are roused in our senses by the contemplation of certain impressions of Nature; and this deep sensing uttered itself in tragic fashion. This power was intensified in that the figure was wholly denied to him. When he needed it, he had to get the help of others. He himself could paint little more than puppets. He came thereby to paint landscape. The luminosity and lustrous colour of Aelbert Cuyp, the happy force of Hobbema were denied to him. The gay colour-sense and jocund style of Adriaen van de Velde he never knew, nor his fine sense of form. Rembrandt's majesty and resonant orchestration were forbidden to him. To all those varying moods of the different hours of the day he was deaf. He played upon a certain gamut; his art concerned itself with the gentle undulating land, or the vast woodland that stands reflected in still waters, or the torrent dashing out of the forest into the rocky foreground,

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or the sandy dunes under the lofty heavens, or the streets of a town or the shore of the sea—and now and again Winter. But what he painted he understood; what he saw he uttered only after brooding upon it. He had no concern with mere "views." To the poetic mood of his desire he bent the glamour of the light, the haunting power of light and shade, and the wizardry that is in the atmosphere. He knew the forms and movement of the clouds—he discovered that in his loneliness. The grandeur of the earth that was revealed to Rembrandt, and that old Seghers saw, Ruisdael did not know, for he was concerned with the tense emotions aroused by the serenity of the power of the elements, by a solemn sense as of the worship in the great temple of a power that knows peace.

A kind-hearted man, a faithful friend, he found joy in his work even though he found little fame or honour. He laid him down and died in utter want in an almshouse, and was buried for a florin, neglected and unappreciated. But he has come into his own. And if in their enthusiasm, he being long enough dead, pedants set him now upon a throne which is an usurpation of his betters, at least he was human. Goethe sought for "symbolism" in his art, as bookish men then had the habit. But Ruisdael was an artist, not an "Ist." The Dresden *Jewish Burial Place* he painted with the mood of the decay of man's earthly endeavour upon him; not for its "symbolism," but because he was an artist and felt the pathos of Nature's remorseless, eternal renewal of life destroying the careful work of men's hands. Knowing his doom, bookish men read it into his art; but Ruisdael did not know it, and gave no slightest thought to it, far less sensing.

CHAPTER XX

WHEREIN WE MEET THE BLITHE POET OF DUTCH LANDSCAPE AND BURY HIM IN A PAUPER'S GRAVE

HOBBEMA
1638 – 1709

WHEREIN WE MEET THE BLITHE POET OF DUTCH LANDSCAPE AND BURY HIM IN A PAUPER'S GRAVE

In 1668 Ruisdael, the bachelor, stood witness to the marriage of his pupil and friend, one Hobbema, then thirty years of age, and mating with a servant-maid some four years his elder.

Meindert Hobbema, born at Amsterdam in 1638, became the pupil of Jacob Ruisdael, who had come to Amsterdam from Haarlem in the middle or late 'fifties. Hobbema was a shrewd fellow, not overfond of work, with a sound, honest common sense; and his marriage to the servant-maid of Burgomaster Reyust of Amsterdam led to his paying that servant's fellow-maid to apply to the worthy Burgomaster for a small post in the wine-customs for the needy painter. Unfortunately, it brought Hobbema just enough to scrape along with; and he forthwith took to painting only when the spirit moved him—and it moved him seldom. From the plaything of his leisure it soon passed into a boredom, and he gave it up altogether. From the second year after his marriage—from 1670—he is known to have painted but one picture until death took him in 1709—the famous *Avenue* in the National Gallery (*The Avenue of Middelharnis*) of 1689. It is said that his powers were on the decline when he married, or a year or so after. This masterpiece flatly gives this gossip the lie.

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Well, he seems to have been a fairly matter-of-fact fellow, this Hobbema; and there are those that feel nothing more in his art. I fail to find mere commonplace in the avenue. And the tense drama of some of his forest-scenes is undoubted. But his imagination was not greatly ranging; and he was content enough to repeat himself overmuch—as in the various *Watermills* at Amsterdam, at the Wallace and in Chicago, of which the Wantage Collection has a painting. The Louvre has a *Mill*, and the National Gallery another.

But Nature rarely aroused in Hobbema the deep haunting moods and emotions that Ruisdael felt. In the dramatic *Edge of a Forest* of the Kann Collection, a superb thing, he felt a sublimity all too rare in his art; and in the *Rustic Bridge* he caught the fragrance of the land and the haunting effects of sunlight with tense power. The famous *Avenue* at the National Gallery saw him employing the decorative effect to compel a strangely rhythmical lyrical feeling. His rare works are to-day eagerly sought after. And his supreme masterpieces being seen in public have established his fame upon his highest achievements. Indeed he is one of the greatest landscape-painters born to a great century. He and Ruisdael were to be overwhelmed by the genius of Turner; whilst more than another Englishman and Frenchman were to rival them both; but Ruisdael and Hobbema were to be the revelation for England's supreme achievement in landscape, and were to share with Claude Lorrain the inspiration of the greatest landscape-painter—the greatest in that he was to be the supreme poet of painting, the son of the Cockney barber called Turner, whom foreign doctors of learning are not yet sufficiently developed in their art-sensing to hail as lord of them all.

XXV

HOBBEMA

1638 - 1709

DUTCH SCHOOL

"THE AVENUE OF MIDDELHARNIS"

(National Gallery)

Signed and dated on the back of the ditch which separates the garden from the road. Painted in oil on canvas. 3 ft. 4½ in. h. × 4 ft. 7½ in. w. (1·028 × 1·409).

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Yet Hobbema wrought his art with such magic, so forcefully, with such blithe joy in Nature, that there are works by him which haunt the senses; and this is poetry if mortal man ever wrote poetry. The sombre and reverent poetry of Ruisdael it may not be; the wide-ranging and sublime poetry of Turner it certainly is not; but the rhythmic utterance of the tall trees in *The Avenue* casts its spell into our senses, as does the dramatic intensity of *The Edge of the Forest*, in as subtle fashion as that whereby Ruisdael ever conquered us. And those two paintings alone make Hobbema the peer of his great master. With what fine decorative sense he wrought the *Ruins of Brederode Castle*!

For Hobbema the friends of Ruisdael also painted the figures into his landscapes—Adriaen van de Velde and others. Hobbema received such starvation prices for his works that his disheartenment is easily accounted for. The man had not the greatness of soul of Ruisdael. The registers of his church hold the grim record of his wife's burial as being "a pauper's funeral," and of Hobbema's own burial again, like grim litany, "a pauper's funeral." He died at the house in the street opposite to that from which Rembrandt's dead body was carried to its shabby sepulchre. Both men slept away out of a barren home in direst want.

But we have a mightier tribute to Hobbema than any that professor ever penned in Old Crome's dying words: "Hobbema, my dear Hobbema, how I have loved you!" Nor did poor Crome know much greater honour than his idol whilst he lived.

Of the imitators of Hobbema and the Ruisdaels were: Solomon Rombouts, who died at Haarlem about 1702; he painted in the manner of Salomon Ruisdael. I. van

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Rombouts painted in the same style; his works are often mistaken for those of Hobbema and Ruisdael. Cornelis Decher, pupil to Salomon Ruisdael, entered the Haarlem Guild in 1643; he died in want in that town in 1678—both Adriaen van de Velde and Adriaen van Ostade painted figures into his landscapes. Roelof de Vries, of the Haarlem Guild, worked in the years of Ruisdael. Abraham Verboom, of the same years, was an imitator of Ruisdael, who chiefly painted woods, for whom Adriaen van de Velde painted the figures. Jan van Kessel, born at Amsterdam 1648, dying there in 1698, was another imitator of Ruisdael. Jan Looten lived long in England, where he died about 1680. Guillam Dubois, who entered the Haarlem Guild in 1646, died at Haarlem in 1680; he painted under the influence of Everdingen and Ruisdael, choosing many subjects from along the Rhine. Joris van der Hagen, working from 1640 to 1669, was strongly under Ruisdael's influence.

Herman Saftleven, born at Rotterdam in 1609, died at Utrecht in 1685; pupil to Jan van Goyen, he painted views of the Rhine and Moselle, with boats and figures; he was also a good portrait and animal painter.

Jan Griffier (1656-1720?), said to have been pupil to Roghman and Wouverman, imitated Saftleven.

Robert Griffier, born in England in 1688, pupil to his father Jan Griffier, painted Rhine scenery, with vessels and figures in his manner.

CHAPTER XXI

OF THE DUTCH PAINTERS OF THE SEA—AND OF A GENIUS IN LANDSCAPE BRED BY THEM

PAINTERS OF THE SEA

1 6 0 0

We have seen some of the greatest landscape-painters of Holland concerning themselves with the sea — Ruisdael and Cuyp of the number.

Of the men who gave their art almost wholly to the sea was Simon de Vlieger, born at Rotterdam about 1604, and known to be living in 1656. His landscapes prove his indebtedness to Van Goyen, whose pupil he is said to have been. Vlieger early devoted himself to the varying moods of the sea, which he painted with truth, handling a free brush, and composing with skill; above all, interested in the aerial leagues above the sea. His colour is cold. The Louvre has a *Calm Sea with Shipping* by him; Munich his *Storm at Sea*. He was a good etcher.

Somewhat older, but working in the same years as Vlieger, was Jan Parcellis, born at Ghent, marrying at Haarlem in 1622, and still living there in 1629, where he was known as "the best painter of ships in existence."

His son and pupil Julius Parcellis, born at Leyerdorf in 1628, came to wide repute as a painter of the sea, and his works are said to be mistaken for those of Van de Velde—but these are more likely to be the works signed J. P. by his greater sea-painting father.

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Working about the same years as Vlieger also was REMEGIUS NOOMS, called ZEEMAN, born about 1612 or 1616 at Amsterdam. His etchings prove visits to France and to England. Besides his pictures of ships and sea-fights, he also painted architectural views; and is known for his etchings.

PAINTERS OF THE SEA

1650

THE FAMILY OF VAN DE VELDE

WILLEM VAN DE VELDE, *the Elder*, of Amsterdam (1611-1693), was a well-known sea-painter, and was father to WILLEM VAN DE VELDE, *the Younger* (1633-1707), the famous sea-painter of the name, and of ADRIAEN VAN DE VELDE (1635-1672), the landscape-painter and the greatest of all his house—there were six painters of the name. Willem van de Velde, *the Elder*, passed a considerable part of his life in England.

WILLEM VAN DE VELDE THE YOUNGER

1633 – 1707

WILLEM VAN DE VELDE, *the Younger*, was born at Amsterdam in 1633, and was to come to fame as a painter of the sea. His younger brother Adriaen van de Velde was to know the like fame as painter of landscapes and of the pastoral. Willem van de Velde shares with Van der Capelle the supreme position as Dutch painter of the sea. Learning his art from his father, he thence went to the teaching of Vlieger, and was early painting the sea and sea-fights in which the English were defeated by the Dutch. His father went to England; and Willem van

de Velde, *the Younger*, followed him thither, where he won the favour of Charles II and his sailor brother the Duke of York, afterwards James II; and for them he now painted the victories of the English fleets over the Dutch. He naturally had a wide vogue amongst the English nobles and gentry; and, of a truth, he was bound to win favour amongst a sea-going folk. His keen interest in the sea in all its moods, his capacity for setting shipping upon the water, his eye for the roll and plunge of vessels in the sea, and of their ride upon calm waters, was true and searching; and his industry was untiring, as the vast number of his drawings proves. He mastered the perspective of the sea and caught the luminous glamour of the aerial deeps. Willem van de Velde, *the Younger*, died at Greenwich in 1707.

OF THE DUTCH PAINTERS OF THE SEA—AND OF A GENIUS IN LANDSCAPE BRED BY THEM

ADRIAEN VAN DE VELDE
1635 – 1672

ADRIAEN VAN DE VELDE, though his father, WILLEM VAN DE VELDE, was come to repute as painter of the sea, and his elder brother, Willem van de Velde, *the Younger*, took to and became famous as a sea-painter, was allowed to shape his own career. Born at Amsterdam about 1635, he was early at work in his father's studio. But it is a nice question whether in the so-called portrait of Adriaen van de Velde and his family in a landscape, at Amsterdam, painted by himself, the handsomely dressed man, a rich and stately figure, is the portrait of the artist. There is gossip that he made so little by his art that his wife had to keep a linen-shop; which also is not likely in face of the large amount of work created by the artist; nor is there that sinister record of official documents which would prove his struggle for bread. So we are left perplexed about the man; except that he had no pauper's funeral.

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Be his fortune good or bad, he was early developing his artistry. He is said to have been pupil to his father and to Jan Wynants. We know that his greater skill was near as early enabling him to paint the figures in his master's (Wynant's) landscapes, and that Adriaen's figures are to-day the chief part of Wynant's fame. This Adriaen was to make the name of Van de Velde famous, and was to reach to high place in the genius of Dutch landscape and animal painting. In 1657, his twenty-second year, he was president of the Guild of Delft. But his wide favour amongst his fellows—indeed, his poetic brush was to paint the figures into the landscapes of some of the best painters of his day—was to be of short duration ; and his world did well to make much of the sunny genial genius, for, like Potter and Wouverman, who share with him and Cuyp the splendour of the Dutch "inhabited landscape," he was doomed to an early death, laying down his gracious and exquisite art in 1672, his thirty-seventh year. To him were granted but some seventeen years of working life ; but he wrought therein an art that makes his name immortal. His sense of balanced composition, his fine handling of the figure, and of the cattle and flocks and herds of his land, his solid colour, his quick telling touch, were not granted to him in vain ; for they were but the exquisite hand's skill to render the tender moods of the rivers and low lands of the country which aroused in his subtle senses a poetic and delightful harmony of forms and colours that are the soul of his blithe art. The sea that called to his kin does not seem to have drawn him. He was sent to complete the great sequence of the balladry of the level lands and peaceful pastoral that Cuyp and Potter wrought to achieve ; and he brought to his destiny a tender and sweet reverie and a lyric blithe note that was uttered with subtle skill of

handling; so that the limpid air was fixed upon his canvases, the tender sunlight surrendered to him, and field and tree, cattle and human being, water and hamlet, are flecked with gem-like light and melt into the allure of his luminous atmosphere.

OF THE DUTCH PAINTERS OF THE SEA—AND OF A GENIUS IN LANDSCAPE BRED BY THEM

And the gods, having willed his early doom, as though to pay this favoured child some compensation, gave him his rare gifts in boyhood, so that he was creating works of art at seventeen.

Adriaen van de Velde could paint the landscape pure and simple with marvellous power; but his companionable soul loved to set human interest ever in the world he created, and cattle and horses or flocks of sheep. And he melted these things into the harmony so that he enhanced the mood of his exquisite design. His fellows at Amsterdam felt the fascination of it, for they called him to the enhancement of their works, and to the landscapes of Wynants, of Van der Heyden, of Hobbema, of Ruysdael, of his brother Willem van de Velde, of Eglon van der Neer, of Philips de Koninck, of Jan Hackaert, of Moucheron, and of Verboom, he added the figures and cattle that inhabit them. And with what tact he compelled his art to fit the style of handling and the mood of each separate painter for whom he wrought! For the street-scenes of his friend, Jan van der Heyden, he painted the figures of fifty pictures; for his master, Wynants, a hundred and fifty.

Potter died at Amsterdam in Adriaen's youth, but his works remained, and the young fellow intently studied them. He tells the seasons of the year, the time of day. In his later years he went to the winter—and it froze his art—his blithe nature missed the sun. In his earlier art, from 1655 to 1660, he wrought many small pastorals, and larger pastorals, of which the National Gallery pieces are

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well-known, fresh and blithe. A cow grazing and one lying down in a field, at Berlin, is one of his earliest paintings.

He wrought his skill in etchings, in drawings, and in water-colours as well as oils—but he wrought it without his wonted genius. He fortunately dated his works freely.

The Amsterdam portrait-group, said to be of himself and his family, is, after all, a landscape with figures. At The Hague is a half-length *Portrait of Himself.* Dresden has a small picture of a young woman raising a glass to her lips, of 1661. The Church of the Augustines, at Amsterdam, has his five pictures of *The Passion.* The large *Flight of Jacob* (1663) at the Wallace, the *Mercury and Argus* (1663) at the Liechtenstein, and the *St. Jerome* (1668) at Schwerin, and the like Biblical subjects are but "inhabited landscapes." But it was the life in the meadows, in the woods, on sea-shore and sand-dune, with man and the animals that man gathers about him, that he loved most to paint, and painted with genius.

At Cassel, *The Beach at Scheveningen* (1658) shows his interest in the shore, which in 1660 he painted in the works at Buckingham Palace and the Louvre. Amsterdam has another in the Six Collection. The Hague has one of 1665. Of his cattle grazing in the meadows in the summer's heat, one is in the Salting Collection (1658), and Berlin has the exquisite *Afternoon* of later years.

The Louvre has the fine *Sunset,* and Berlin *The Farm* of 1666; Leipzig his *Halt at the Tavern*; Rotterdam his *Halt at the Smithy.* In his later work the brown ground has come through and darkened his slick and lighter handling.

Adriaen van de Velde died at Amsterdam in 1672.

Of the pupils of Adriaen van de Velde was DIRK VAN BERGEN, born at Haarlem, and working from 1661 to 1690; who was a successful imitator, and about 1673 went to London and settled there.

Another imitator was PETER VAN DER LEEUW, who died in 1704, whose Munich *Grey Cow Drinking* (1671) is one of his best works.

VAN DER CAPELLE

1624? – 1680

Whether JAN VAN DER CAPELLE were pupil to Rembrandt, as well as friend and adviser, is not known. Born at Amsterdam, he became chiefly famous as a sea-painter. With a fine sense of light and shade, and distinguished in style, Van der Capelle is to be seen at his best at the National Gallery, revealing an art closely akin now to that of Cuyp, and now to that of Willem van de Velde. He lived a life free from the money-needs of many of his fellows, inheriting rich dye-works. He himself died on the New Year's Day of 1680, leaving a fortune and a fine collection of pictures, which included masterpieces by Hals and Rembrandt, to say nothing of five hundred drawings by Rembrandt. It is thought that the portrait of him by Rembrandt is the Carlisle *Portrait of a Man* of 1648. His distinguished art is almost sole witness to his greatness. That he was born at Amsterdam, that he was free of the city in 1653, we know. He, like Cuyp, loved the sea at peace, and was fascinated by the stateliness of shipping and the glamour of reflections in the great still waters, whether in the golden mood of warm sunlight that appealed to Cuyp, or the silvery moods that Van de Velde painted with such skill. His finest works are in England. The Aremberg Collection at Brussels has a fine sea-piece by him which he signed

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"C. V. Capell." The National Gallery *Calm* is well known.

JAN DUBBELS
1621 – 1676

Little is known of JAN DUBBELS but his good sea-pieces. He is the reputed master of Backhuysen, to whom, unfortunately, much of his work is given. But Amsterdam has his large *Sea-coast in Storm*, signed; and the Pitti has another.

BACKHUYSEN
1631 – 1708

Ludolph Backhuysen, born at Embden in 1631, was apprenticed to trade until his eighteenth year, when he went into Everdingen's studio. He chose the sea for his art, and mastered its effects with dogged industry. But he never so mastered the sea as to win to Van de Velde's subtlety; and his work is too often crude and commonplace. He was perhaps at his best in storms. He came into wide vogue in his day, and the King of Prussia, the Elector of Saxony, and the Grand Duke of Tuscany were all his patrons. Munich has a well-known sea-piece with shipping by him. Amsterdam, the Louvre, The Hague, Vienna and the National Gallery possess good works by him. The National Gallery has, amongst other works, *Off the Mouth of the Thames*, and a small *Coast Scene*. He also made many drawings, and he was an etcher. Backhuysen died at Amsterdam in 1708.

Of the lesser sea-painters were LIEVE VERSHUUR, born at Rotterdam early in the sixteen-hundreds, dying in 1691—he was pupil to Vlieger, and painted some good sea-pieces; ABRAHAM STORK, born at Amsterdam, dying in 1708,

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influenced by Backhuysen, was an etcher as well as exquisite painter; MICHIEL MADDERSTEG (1659-1709) was pupil to Backhuysen; JAN CLAASZ RIETSCHOOF, born at Hoorn 1652, dying 1719, was also a pupil and imitator of Backhuysen.

Ruskin, in order to proclaim the greatness of Turner, sneered away the vogue of the Dutch sea-painters; but Turner was too great for such sorry witness. Some of the Dutchmen were held in too great honour, 'tis true enough, as Old Masters are to-day; but Ruskin's scorn was flung at great and little alike. His "Van Somethings and Back Somethings" included Van de Velde and Backhuysen in whom he could see no "lowest redeeming merit," but as he looked for things outside the range of art—"intellect," and the "agreeable," perhaps he thereby missed more significant things. To deny them "perception of any sort or kind" accounts perhaps for his own incapacity to sense art, even when a Whistler came to mastery.

CHAPTER XXII

OF THE LESSER MEN WHO WERE THE ITALIANISED DUTCH PAINTERS OF THE PASTORAL AND LANDSCAPE

LANDSCAPE

THE Italian journey was the goal of many Dutchmen the while ; and there journeyed to Italy several painters of the pastoral who brought back Italian scenery with Italian ruins to set them on the level plains of Holland, and place Dutch shepherds and shepherdesses with their flocks and herds thereby.

ASSELYN
1610 – 1660

The earliest to go was JAN ASSELYN, who, born at Diepen by Amsterdam in 1610, became pupil to Esaias van de Velde and Jan Miel, and went to Italy from 1630 to 1645. The Louvre has four of his works ; Amsterdam a good work, a huge ruin in front, with peasants and asses and mules, a bridge in the centre, and blue mountains beyond. His flocks at fords, travellers at a ferry, and his Munich *Ruined Castle*, are his best type of art. He died in 1660.

VAN DER DOES
1623 – 1673

JACOB VAN DER DOES, born at Amsterdam 1623, pupil to Moeyaert, went to Rome where he came under Pieter van Laer. He painted Italian or Italianesque landscapes of considerable charm, into which he often brought figures of

sheep and goats uncommonly well handled. He married at Haarlem in 1650, and died at The Hague in 1673.

BERCHEM
1620 – 1683

NICHOLAS, or CLAES PIETERSZ BERCHEM, born at Haarlem, was the most famous of this Italianised group of pastoral Dutch painters. Pupil to several artists, including Jan Baptist Weenix, he early came to distinction. Going to Italy, he caught the Italian style in landscape and figure. He had marked poetic gifts, and a delight in the luminous sunlit heavens; a fine draughtsman with a sense of arrangement, he employed a deft, spirited craftsmanship. Placing his shepherds and shepherdesses in Italian pose, he came to a trick of thumb in painting herds and flocks. The clamour and insistence of a money-getting wife drove him to haste of production. Most of the great galleries possess him. He painted figures and animals in the landscapes of Ruysdael and Hobbema, of Jan Wels and Verboom and Moucheron. His lighting is often very like the art of Cuyp. He was master of the elegancies. He was a good etcher; and his wash drawings are admirable. He died at Amsterdam in 1683.

Of Berchem's imitators were ABRAHAM BEGYN and J. F. SOLEMAKER.

DU JARDIN
1622 – 1678

KAREL DU JARDIN is said to have been a pupil of Berchem, but more likely was influenced by Paul Potter. Going early to Rome, however, he henceforth caught the Italianesque style. Returning to Holland he entered the Guild at The Hague in 1656; thence went to Amsterdam in 1658, where he settled and worked until 1669, when he

LAND-SCAPE

went back to Italy, eventually dying at Venice in 1678. He painted very much the same subjects as Berchem, also portraits. He gave himself up to a life of pleasure, so that his output is not very great. The Louvre is rich in him. He was also an etcher.

Of the imitators of Du Jardin were WILLEM REYN, pupil to Berchem, who joined the Guild at Haarlem in 1646, where he was still living in 1693; and HENRICK MOMMERS, born at Haarlem 1623, and dying there in 1697.

JAN BAPTIST WEENIX

1621 – 1660

Jan Baptist Weenix sometimes approaches high rank in his pastoral scenes and animals, and in his lighting is often fine. He also painted the sea-shore. His Italianesque vision is very marked.

THOMAS WYCK

THOMAS WYCK, born at Beverwyck, entered the Haarlem Guild in 1642; died at Haarlem on the 19th August 1677. His art shows the Italian visit. He ran rather to *Alchemists* and *Ruins on the Sea-shore*, and antique fountains and women washing in the same, and seaports in the stately vein. He was also an etcher.

LINGELBACH

1623 – 1674

JOHANN LINGELBACH, born at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, went early to Italy, and, coming to Amsterdam, fell under the influence of Wynants, in whose landscapes he often painted figures and animals; fell also under the glamour of Wouverman, whom he imitated. The National Gallery has his *Hay Harvest* (1661). He also painted Italian

harbours, riding-schools, vegetable-markets, and the like. He died at Amsterdam.

JAN VAN DER MEER DE JONGE, born at Haarlem in 1656, was a good painter of sheep, which take the chief place in his landscapes. He married the sister of the painter Cornelis Dusart in 1683. He died at Haarlem in 1705.

SIMON VAN DER DOES (1653-1717), had the Italianesque vision. Figures are more important in his works in relation to the landscape—cattle with girl and shepherd in a landscape; maid milking cow, with bull in foreground (1712); mother and infant, and the like.

OF THE LESSER MEN WHO WERE THE ITALIANISED DUTCH PAINTERS OF THE PASTORAL AND LANDSCAPE

MOUCHERON

1633 – 1686

FREDERICK MOUCHERON, born at Emden, became pupil to Asselyn. He went to Paris, thence to Amsterdam, where he settled, dying there. He invented Italian scenery, for which the animals and figures were painted by by Helmbrecker, Adriaen van de Velde, and Lingelbach.

ISAAC MOUCHERON, born at Amsterdam in 1670, dying there in 1744, was pupil and imitator of his father, Frederick Moucheron.

HERMAN VAN SWANEVELT, born at Woerden in Holland about 1600, died 1655, went as a youth to Rome, and became a pupil of Claude Lorrain. He was called "the Hermit." He caught much of the fine sense of composition and aerial luminosity of Lorrain. Hampton Court has three of his works. He was also a well-known etcher.

HACKAERT

1629 – 1699

JAN HACKAERT's master is not known, but whilst still a youth he went to Germany and Switzerland. Hence the

LAND-SCAPE

mountain comes into his landscapes. But he was in his element amongst the woods about The Hague, with the sunlight streaming into the glades. A. van Ostade and Lingelbach painted the figures for him when he went a-hunting in forest glades, and the like. He painted much for the decoration of rooms.

BARTHOLOMAEUS BREENBERG (1620?-1663?) founded his style on Poelemberg. He went to Italy. Painting sacred subjects and small landscapes with Roman ruins. He always introduced ruins where possible. Dresden and the Louvre possess works by him.

JAN BOTH
1610? – 1652

JAN BOTH, born at Utrecht, was pupil to Bloemart, but, going to Italy early with his brother ANDREAS BOTH, came under the influence of Claude Lorrain, and painted Italian scenery almost wholly. He is the most Italian of all the Dutchmen; and, probably in that he wholly gave himself up to the Italian glamour, without attempt to adapt it to the Dutch style, he succeeded in creating dignified compositions with ethereal golden skies and melting distances. Both Andreas and Poelemberg painted his figures for him. He was somewhat monotonous in his designs—great trees in front, with a great plain stretching to mountains rising beyond. And he trends to that fiery reddishness of hue over all that seemed to afflict the Italianisers. Amsterdam, the Louvre, The Hague, and the National Gallery have a good many of his works. He also etched landscapes.

Of the men who founded their art on Jan Both were—WILLEM DE HEUSCH (of the Utrecht Guild in 1649), the pupil and imitator of Both; JACOB DE HEUSCH, born at Utrecht in 1657, dying in 1701, the nephew and pupil of

Willem de Heusch, whom he imitated, as he did Herman Saftleven; ADAM PYNACKER, born at Pynacker in 1621, dying in 1673, who went early to Italy.

JAN GLAUBER (1646-1726) was born of German parents at Utrecht; became the pupil of Berchem, went to Italy and fell under the glamour of Poussin. He came back and settled awhile at Hamburg. In 1684 he went to Amsterdam, where Lairesse often painted the figures for his pastoral landscapes; and got the nickname of POLYDOR.

JAN GOTTLIEB GLAUBER (1667-1703) was the younger brother of Jan Glauber, and went to Italy with him, and imitated him; he was known by the Italians as MYRTIL. He settled at Breslau, where he died.

ALBERT MEYERING, born at Amsterdam in 1645, was pupil to his father, FREDERICK MEYERING, went in youth to Italy with Jan Glauber, and imitated him. He died there in 1714.

OF THE LESSER MEN WHO WERE THE ITALIANISED DUTCH PAINTERS OF THE PASTORAL AND LANDSCAPE

CHAPTER XXIII

OF THE DUTCH PAINTERS OF STREET-SCENES AND BUILDINGS

SANREDAM

1597 – 1665

LAND-SCAPE

PIETER JANSZOON SANREDAM, born at Assendelft, became the pupil of Pieters de Grebber. He joined the Haarlem Guild in 1623. He is the link with the earlier painters of architecture like Neefs. Widely famous in his day, Sanredam painted the interiors of churches and large buildings with fine treatment of light, employing exquisite purity of colour. He died at Haarlem in 1665.

VAN DELEN

1605 – 1671

DIRK VAN DELEN, born at Alkmaar, is said to have been pupil to Frans Hals. He painted interiors and outsides of buildings in the classical style, employing effects of elaborate perspective, painted in silvery key; and his handling is excellent, even if his architecture be somewhat insistent. The Vienna Gallery has a fine building treated with considerable grandeur; the colonnade of pillars and the figures of this large piece are well designed. The aerial treatment and the free handling in this his masterpiece are very remarkable. He was much given to large canvases. Van Delen died at Armuyden.

EMANUEL DE WITTE

1617 – 1692

EMANUEL DE WITTE, born at Alkmaar, became pupil

to Evert van Aelst, a painter of dead game and still life, but early gave his art to the painting of the interiors of buildings. His fine sense of light and shade, due to the revelation of Rembrandt, and his rich broad handling, raised De Witte to high achievement. His broad massing, his well-drawn figures, and his sense of picturesque add greatly to his power. De Witte died at Amsterdam in 1692.

HENDRICK VAN VLIET

1608 – 1675

HENDRICK VAN VLIET, pupil to his father, H. C. van Vliet, was strongly influenced by De Witte, whom he closely rivalled, painting with great luminosity. He is also said to have painted pictures of the life of the people by lamplight. He died in great want in 1675.

C. HOCKGEEST

Almost unknown to fame, Hockgeest painted in the middle sixteen-hundreds some fine interiors of churches with brilliant and luminous employment of light.

ISAAC VAN NICKELEN, who joined the Haarlem Guild in 1660, dying at Haarlem in 1703, founded his art on that of Hockgeest.

JAN VAN NICKELEN was pupil and imitator of his father, Isaac.

EMANUEL MURAND

1622 – 1700

EMANUEL MURAND, born at Amsterdam in 1622, became pupil to Wouverman. His taste was for picturesque exteriors of dilapidated village houses, bringing figures and cattle in the foregrounds. He died at Leeuwarden in 1700.

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Of Amsterdam also was JAN ABRAHAMSZ BEERSTRAETEN (1622-1666).

VAN DER HEYDEN

1637 - 1712

JAN VAN DER HEYDEN, born at Gorinchem in 1637, was a famous painter of the outsides of buildings, which are remarkable for his finish—palaces, churches, street-scenes, canals with the great buildings on their banks—indeed, we may call him the painter of street-scenes. His friend Adriaen van de Velde painted the figures for him; after whose death, Eglon van der Neer and Lingelbach rendered him the same service. Most of his pictures are small. He, unfortunately for his art, was so deeply interested in fire-engines that he was made the head of the fire brigade by the magistracy, and gave up his artistic talents to the hobby. England is rich in his works. He died at Amsterdam in 1712.

BERK-HEYDE

1638 - 1698

GERRIT BERK-HEYDE, born at Haarlem, painted Dutch and Italian exteriors and interiors of buildings, painting figures and animals with considerable skill for their adornment. He joined the Haarlem Guild in 1660, dying in the June of 1698.

He was assisted by his brother, JOB BERK-HEYDE (1630-1693), who also painted landscape and portraits.

VAN DER ULFT

1627 - 1688?

Born at Gorinchem, JACOB VAN DER ULFT came to some repute as painter of the piazzas, buildings, and monuments of Rome, which he imagined from engravings, since he

never went to Italy. The pictures of the streets and buildings of his own land he enhanced with figures and animals; he had a sense of the picturesque. He was good in landscape and in paintings of the sea-shore, painting freely, with lively touch, and with a good sense of colour and luminosity. He had a liking for ruins.

OF THE DUTCH PAINTERS OF STREET-SCENES AND BUILDINGS

THE GREAT DUTCH PAINTERS OF ANIMALS AND STILL-LIFE

CHAPTER XXIV

OF THE GREAT DUTCH PAINTERS OF ANIMALS

Of the Dutchmen who painted wild animals and dogs, fighting or in repose, alive or dead, Abraham Hondius was born at Rotterdam in 1638, went to England, and settling there died in London in 1695. He painted animals fighting and the chase—wolves fighting dogs, buffaloes fighting a leopard, and the like.

JAN WEENIX

1640 – 1719

Jan Weenix, the son and pupil of the landscape and pastoral painter, Jan Baptist Weenix, was born at Amsterdam, and, like him, sometimes painted seaports. But he is chiefly known for his full-size dead animals, above all dead hares, for which he is famous, with dead birds—peacocks, swans, geese, pheasants, partridges. He would now and again add thereto a live dog. He was fond of setting an elaborate urn in his design with a distant landscape. He painted several of these as decorations for the castle of Bensberg on the Rhine for the Elector John William; and he handled them in masterly fashion—some of them are at Munich. He is to be found in nearly all the great galleries. He also occasionally painted flower-pieces. Weenix died at Amsterdam in 1719.

Some paintings of dead game and still-life given to Weenix were by a Scottish painter, William Gouw Ferguson, who lived awhile in Holland, dying about 1695.

THE GREAT DUTCH PAINTERS OF ANIMALS AND STILL-LIFE

THEODOR VALKENBURG (1675-1721), born at Amsterdam, became pupil to Jan Weenix, and came so close to his master that his pictures are often given to Weenix. He was also a portrait-painter. Valkenburg lived long in Germany, painting for several princes there.

HONDECOETER

1636 – 1695

MELCHIOR DE HONDECOETER, born at Utrecht in 1636, was the pupil of his father, GISBERT HONDECOETER. He joined the Guild of the Hague in 1659. He became world-famous for his paintings of live birds—poultry, peacocks, turkeys, pigeons in a landscape, as well as dead. Arranging them with a fine sense of decoration and glorying in their form and colour, Hondecoeter created sumptuous designs and a most picturesque art. Painted boldly and the size of life and finely modelled, Hondecoeter recorded the actions and forms of bird-life with searching truth, and wrought their impression with genius. Amsterdam is very rich in him. The National Gallery has a fine example of this master; but some of the greatest are in private possession. Hondecoeter died in 1695.

JACOB VICTORS

Of Jacob Victors little is known. He had a wide repute as rival to Hondecoeter. He was living at Venice in 1663.

CHAPTER XXV

OF THE GREAT DUTCH PAINTERS OF STILL-LIFE AND FLOWERS

STILL-LIFE

THE Dutch are illustrious for their paintings of Still-Life, whether flowers, or dead animals, or vegetables. But, curiously enough, though we always think of the Dutchmen at the mention of the phrase, in that many great artists gave their whole art to it, it should be remembered that nearly every one of the supreme painters wrought it into their art with consummate gifts—Velazquez spent years upon it alone, though, alas! these works are now lost to us; but to it he always paid most weighty attention—Rembrandt again, and Frans Hals, and other giants. The Dutch and Spaniards painted it for its own sake. The very names of many of these Dutchmen have been lost to us, their works being given to a few famous artists—flung to a De Heem or a Snyders. So, as Bode points out, the rich proud merchants of the old town of Haarlem glorified their handsome plate, their peacock pasties, their finely wrought glasses that held champagne, and the like splendours of their banqueting tables—whilst the people enjoyed their tankard of ale, their oysters, cheese, and pipes. In learned Leyden the professors enjoyed their books and their musical instruments over an ascetic glass of beer and pipes, with the death's-head of philosophy thrown in on occasion, or hour-glass or lamp as symbol of the fleetingness of life. At Scheveningen were the fish upon the market-stall.

THE GREAT DUTCH PAINTERS OF ANIMALS AND STILL-LIFE

At Utrecht fruit and flowers, with their gorgeous colour, were the glory of the Protestants. In Amsterdam the painters had their artists' "properties" of every kind. To all was the fascination of the homely things that are the sweet familiar possessions, the trinkets and the personal belongings of the individual man. Dutch art always did that—always flung the pretences into the gutter, and desired the glorification of the life it loved. So Beijeren and Gillig and Putter painted their fish; Heda and Kalf and Claeuw their tables with fruit and glass and flowers; At Haarlem lived, and wrought his art from 1617 to 1661, PIETER CLAASZ or PIETER CLAESZ, sometimes called C. PIERSON, father of Berchem. He signed his still-life with his initials P.C., painting eatables and drinking vessels and table utensils.

At Haarlem also was born—in 1627—PIETER ROESTRAETEN, a pupil of Frans Hals, who wrought still-life; he went to London, where he died in 1698.

HEDA

1594–1680?

And at Haarlem also was born WILLEM KLAASZ HEDA, who painted game and fish and birds, and those "breakfast" pieces, in broad masterly fashion.

His kinsman CORNELIS CLAESZ HEDA, who entered the Haarlem Guild in 1587, went to the court of a prince in India.

DE HEEM

1606–1683-4

JAN DAVIDS DE HEEM, born at Utrecht in 1603, was pupil to his father DAVID DE HEEM, and was to become world-famous as one of the greatest painters of fruit in all time, one of the supreme masters of still-life. In 1635 he

went to Antwerp and joined the Guild, living thereat for thirty-two years. In 1667 he was back in his native Utrecht; in 1672 went back again to Antwerp, and there remained until his death in 1683 or early months of 1684. To Antwerp, therefore, the greater part of his work belongs; and Antwerp claims him as a Fleming thereby. But he went to Antwerp a finished Dutch painter; and Dutch he remained to the core, spite of a certain Flemish vision that came to him.

OF THE GREAT DUTCH PAINTERS OF STILL-LIFE AND FLOWERS

De Heem's earlier works—those of his early twenties—are fruit-pieces, somewhat timid in touch but of good colour, if brownish in tone—called his "fruit-dishes." But at twenty-three, during a stay in Leyden, he came into touch with the *Vanitas* pieces of the learned old city, and painted such subjects in small works, which naturally developed his sense of the picturesque, since light and shade were more needed. Here Rembrandt's revelation came to him. At Leyden he took pupils.

He moved to Antwerp in 1634-1635, with increased sense of chiaroscuro, to paint his flower-pieces and fruit-pieces in an art now informed by rich warm vision, and his full brush and Dutch style are in marked contrast to Daniel Seghers' fluid thin paint and decorative intention, learnt from Rubens. De Heem's Dutch sense of character is his dominant note always. And this influence was wide upon all the Netherlandish art.

With a consummate taste in arrangement, and great luminosity of colour, De Heem employed still-life to utter harmonies of colour and light and shade that produce rhythm and resonance in the senses, such as a garden in summer creates—producing a strangely lyrical poesy not easy to define. Critics are wont to patronise the painting of still-life as a narrow thing; yet De Heem and Kalf

could rouse in us this compelling, lyrical note, such as few painters of ambitious "subjects" have been able to equal.

De Heem could do with still-life very often what only a Rembrandt or other giant could do with his more vast appeal and titanic genius; and that De Heem could reach such heights proves the greatness of the man.

Fortunately De Heem usually signed his works. Vienna has his famous *Chalice of the Sacrament,* crowned with a wreath above which hangs the Host—a large work for him, some four feet square, which reaches to grandeur. The Louvre has his table with a green cloth on which are fruits and an oyster; and another table with bowls, water-pots, dishes, fruits, knives, and a clock, with a tablecloth.

CORNELIS DE HEEM
1623 – 1678?

Cornelis de Heem, the son and pupil of the great master, painted in the manner of his father, for whose works his are often mistaken.

Maria van Osterwych, born at Nootdorp by Delft, and dying in 1693, was a pupil of Jan Davids de Heem; she painted flowers in vases or glasses, and sometimes fruit —a good artist.

Abraham Mignon, born at Frankfort in 1635, dying at Wetzlar in 1679, was pupil to Jan Davids de Heem.

Jacob Walscapelle, born 1640? who flourished about 1667 to 1718, was pupil to Jan Davids de Heem, whom at times he closely approaches. His works often pass for those of the De Heems.

Pieter de Ring, who joined the Leyden Guild in 1648, was a follower of De Heem. He often signed his works with a ring. Amsterdam has a fine still-life of fruit, oysters, bread, and a boiled lobster and the like by him.

OF PAINTING

KALF

1621-2–1693

OF THE GREAT DUTCH PAINTERS OF STILL-LIFE AND FLOWERS

WILLEM KALF, born at Amsterdam in 1630, is said to have been the pupil of the portraitist and painter of the home-life, Hendrik Pot. He came to fame as one of the greatest Dutch painters of still-life, his favourite subjects being superb arrangements of fruit and eatables with wine-filled glasses on a table, generally with a disordered tablecloth of rich texture. And how superbly he wrought these things!

Kalf is remarkably modern. His vision revealed to him in all its fulness by Rembrandt, Kalf compels our senses with a powerful employment of chiaroscuro and vigour of handling combined with exquisite draughtsmanship that in its realm is near as great as Rembrandt's skill. His rich warm colouring, his resonant and haunting shadows, and his magic use of light all set him amongst the great painters of all time.

Born in 1621 or 1622, Kalf began to enrich the great art of his great age at twenty, as the dates of the early 'forties upon his works prove. With the art of his reputed master he has nothing in common. Some of his early works were landscapes which look as if he had seen the art of Van Goyen, but the large still-life pieces he painted from the beginning—the so-called "Breakfasts," akin to the work of Treck, Heda, and Claesz, dishes of a frugal meal upon a breakfast-table, with superb jugs and drinking-vessels of silver or silver-gilt or pewter, cool in lighting, and somewhat monochrome in harmony. Oysters, nuts, and a glass of Rhenish wine—a wineglass with a tankard and clay pipe and brazier—and the like. Then Rembrandt's rich design conquers the young Kalf; and from twenty-five he

comes to lustrous colour, glowing and splendid, with that deep, haunting, resonant chiaroscuro and superb arrangement that sets him amongst the immortals—those small kitchen-pieces with vegetables, crockery heaped in picturesque ordered disorder, such as the Louvre, New York, and Berlin possess, in which raw meats and gourds and jugs and cloth, with vessels of brass and copper, loom into brilliant lighting, or are engulfed in luminous shadow: the works that French Boucher so greatly loved; or those superb and lavish breakfast-tables, set out in disordered magnificence upon a marble slab with Eastern carpet for tablecloth—the porcelain dishes of lemons and oranges with rinds half peeled, close by a silver jug or coloured wineglass filled with Rhenish, perhaps a silver centre-piece or elaborate loving-cup, Venetian glasses, long or globular, in which the warm wine glows, a lacquered box, an enamelled watch or clock hard by—the whole fragrant of sweet odours, gorgeous against the darkling deep shadow beyond. Yes; Kalf was the poet of them all. The orchestration is like music of viols and flutes and resounding bass. Le Mans is fortunate in possessing his great masterpiece. And it is a dry comment on taste that the great collections shed these glorious things and gave them to their poorer cousins, the provincial galleries! Berlin has the good fortune to possess five—and such masterpieces! Here again was a lord of the Baroque—Baroque, as indeed was much of the greatest art of Holland, Rembrandt's amongst others. The Baroque had to go to Amsterdam to be purified, and emerged therefrom in the splendour of Rembrandt and Kalf, as in Flanders it reached to glory in Rubens.

Kalf died at Amsterdam in 1693; and at his passing the art of his age was near dead.

VAN BEIJEREN
1620? – 1675?

OF THE GREAT DUTCH PAINTERS OF STILL-LIFE AND FLOWERS

ABRAHAM VAN BEIJEREN or BEYEREN has been rescued of late from oblivion. Born at The Hague, of the same years as Kalf, he wrought his fine genius unnoticed by his times. He often reaches to an achievement that closely rivals that of Kalf. Living for a long while at The Hague, shifting from house to house to escape his creditors, he wrought his art with dogged industry and quick facile hand. For long his monogram has been given to other men who were unfit to wear it. But his paintings of fish and still-life have won the artists and brought him to his bays at last. A Berlin fish-piece bears his full name and the date 1655, his early period, in which we have a fortunate exception to his lack of dating.

Van Beijeren was brother-in-law to PIETER DE PUTTER, the fish-painter of The Hague; and, as Bode suggests, was probably his pupil, being some twenty years younger. His grey schemes and their dashing style of painting show his early phase, from which we may assume his landscapes, or rather seascapes, to be of the same years. Then came his great phase in which he painted those richly coloured and sumptuous "breakfast-tables," in which gorgeous vessels lie beside half-peeled lemons and oranges and the like—those fine richly wrought arrangements of flowers and fruits, and his still-life pieces. In all his still-life he loved to introduce a red note—amongst his fish a boiled lobster, crabs, or slices of salmon; in his "breakfasts" a lobster, a boiled ham, oranges, or the like. He gloried in the glitter of reflections and the flicker of high lights. Tumblers and glasses with Rhenish therein he wrought into his splendour. Amsterdam has a superb bouquet

THE GREAT DUTCH PAINTERS OF ANIMALS AND STILL-LIFE

of roses by him. The Kann Collection a gorgeous work. Van Beijeren takes rank with Kalf and De Heem; which is to say, with the great genius of the art of Holland.

Some painters of dead birds were: EVERT VAN AELST, born at Delft in 1602, died in 1658, who painted dead birds, hares, and weapons and implements of the chase with skill; C. LELIENBERGH, who lived and wrought his art about the same time, and in the same subjects, with fruit and vegetables in a cool key and with broader touch; he was living in 1663.

VAN AELST
1620 – 1679

WILLEM VAN AELST, born at Delft in 1620, dying at Amsterdam in 1679, was the pupil of his uncle Evert van Aelst, whom he greatly surpassed; his favourite subjects being eatables and fruit, herrings, oysters, bread and the like, with glasses and gorgeous gold and silver vessels, very finely rendered.

Then there was a group of painters of plants and insects on a dark ground, such as OTTO MARSEUS VAN SCHRIEK of Amsterdam (1613-1693), and his pupil MATTHEW WITHOOS (1629-1703), and NICOLAUS VROMANS, "the snake painter," born in 1655.

RACHEL REYSCH, born at Amsterdam in 1664, dying there in 1750, was pupil to Willem van Aelst. She came into considerable vogue as a flower-painter.

But the great painter of flowers of this age was

JAN VAN HUYSUM
1682 – 1749

Born at Amsterdam, JAN VAN HUYSUM became pupil to his father JUSTUS VAN HUYSUM, a scene-painter, who ranged

over landscape, animals, seascapes and street-scenes, and the ornamentation of Dutch rooms. Jan van Huysum was one of four sons employed as his assistants, but early displayed so fine a talent for flowers and fruit that he gave himself up wholly to the handsome business. He came to the most exquisite painting of flowers thereby, gifted with a rare colour-sense and employing a liquid glowing pigment. Though he had not De Heem's superb gifts of arrangement and style and light and shade, his colour faculty was markedly pure and splendid. He rightly came into high fashion, and princes paid him large sums for his masterpieces.

ROEPEL
1679 – 1748

CONRAD ROEPEL, born at The Hague, where he died, though pupil to Constantin Netscher, and beginning by painting portraits, soon gave all his art to fruits and flowers in the style of Huysum.

JAN VAN OS
1744 – 1808

Jan van Os, born at Middelharnis in 1744, dying in 1808, formed his art upon that of Huysum, arranging and employing glowing colour-schemes with power.

So, amidst beautiful flowers, the great art of Holland went to sleep, to arise again in the exquisite achievement of modern times.

The artistic achievement of Holland is as remarkable for the tragic neglect of her artists as it is for its greatness. It is a sad story, yet it proves that great art compels its own utterance through the fortitude and power of the artist alone, even if the artist be crucified for it.

Rembrandt's public works for his city scarce reach to his highest fulfilment; and we know that Hals was not only irked by it, but his greatest art is not to be found in his large Doelen groups; it is to his heads and the like portraits that we must go to see his supreme wizardry. To say with Bode that adversity had "a stimulating effect and raised the quality of the work" is to find gold where there is only gravel. But there is no slightest doubt that Dutch art, like all art, is greatest when the artist follows only his artistic inspiration.

Nor should we leave the Dutchmen, whose landscapes hold the fresh airs of heaven, without remembering that, whilst they sketched notes out of doors, they painted their works in the studio.

In 1672 Louis the Fourteenth of France struck at the independence of this great little people, and 1709 saw the Dutch struck down at Malplaquet by Marlborough. But the heart of Holland stood strong; and she has won through to a great destiny in art again as in virile courage and industry.

Thus we have watched Rembrandt and Hals bugle forth the democracy; it was they, the Dutchmen, to whom the new learning, the new thought was revealed through their senses—that new thought that had failed in Italy. Rembrandt glorified the Home Life and set it above the splendour of thrones and palaces; and out of Rembrandt's sensing was born that school of Dutch painters of the Home Life that the pedants call *genre*; and the masters of them, Maas and Vermeer and De Hooch, owed their chief tribute to him.

Thus the artists took to painting the peasant, the citizen, the aristocrat in all their varied doings—in the tavern, the

brothel, the street, in camp and quarter. War was at every man's door, and a sword on every man's hip. The merchant and the trader lived their demure life in their demure home. The housewife went about her household cares. The servant slept then as now over the allotted task. Rembrandt's chiaroscuro widened and deepened the whole province of art's utterance and made a vaster orchestration for the communion of the tragedy and comedy of life.

THE END OF VOLUME V.

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